

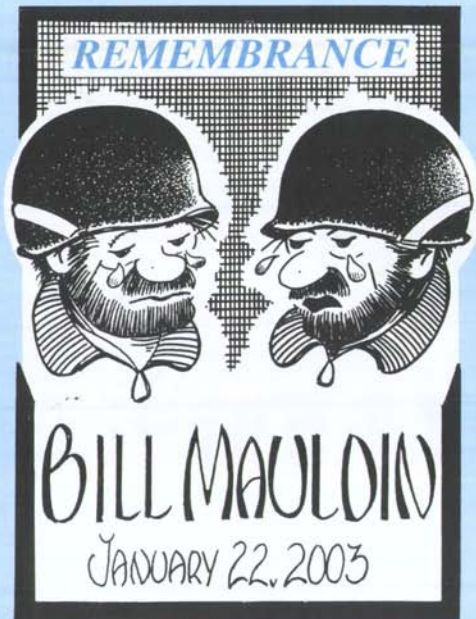
The BULGE BUGLE

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION • VETERANS OF THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE, INC.

VOLUME XXII NUMBER 2

THE ARDENNES CAMPAIGN

May 2003



APOLOGIES TO B.M.
See Pages 7, 8

—PETRICK—



YOUR NEXT VBOB REUNION...

QUINCY, MASS.

8 MILES SOUTH OF HISTORIC BOSTON

SEPT. 4, 5, 6, 7, 2003

COMPLETE DETAILS PAGES 16, 17, 18, 19

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CONTACT THE CHAPTER IN YOUR AREA.
YOU WILL BE GLAD YOU DID.

IF YOU FIND YOU HAVE A LITTLE TIME,
WRITE TO VBOB AND WE'LL SEND YOU THE
NECESSARY TOOLS TO GET OFF TO A
GOOD START IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF A
CHAPTER IN YOUR AREA. YOU'LL FIND
THAT IT'S EASY TO DO AND THE REWARDS
TO ALL OF THOSE YOU BRING TOGETHER
CANNOT BE DUPLICATED.

President's Message

As I write this message, the sound of bombs exploding, the heavy artillery firing, and the buzz-saw sounds of automatic weapons have taken over the television set in the next room.

Like many of you, I remember similar combat sounds which re-awakened bad memories, sounds I thought I would never hear again--sounds we lived with when we were younger and fighting for our lives in Normandy, the Siegfried Line, or the snow covered Ardennes. Today, in 2003, thousands of American, British, Australian, and soldiers of other nationalities are fighting for their lives in a region half a world away and more than half a century later. They are hearing first hand the sounds relayed via satellite to the rest of an anxious world. In countless homes, these sounds are heard by parents, grandparents, and other relatives and friends.

Our hearts and prayers are with them all as they are in the front lines of a battle for freedom and democracy in a region where those treasured rights are little known, if at all. Just as the world supported us 58 years ago, I know you are supporting them in this, America's first major war of the 21st century.

I write this in the knowledge that we who have been there before will do our best to try to go on with our lives as best we can, with admiration and confidence, as this new generation fights for the freedoms we have known for over 225 years.

I think it is fitting as we think about our 2003 Annual Reunion when we will be assembling in Quincy, Massachusetts, a short distance outside Boston where the 13 Colonies' fight for freedom and democracy began with the Boston Tea Party. For history buffs, and many of us are, the Boston area holds so many sites to keep us moving around. While Quincy itself is the birthplace of John Adams and his son John Quincy Adams, both of whom were American Presidents, it is also the birthplace of John Hancock, President of the First Continental Congress. We'll be meeting at the Quincy Marriott, one of the top hotels in the area, from September 4th to 7th, and your committee has a full program planned. You can read about it later in this edition of *The Bulge Bugle*. As you do, think about Paul Revere's ride, Lexington and Concord, and "the shot heard 'round the world."

Our theme this year will be "The Christmas We Never Had," taking us back to December 15, 1944--so think back to where you were on that day. To help jog your memory, if any help is needed, we'll have Christmas trees, Lucky Strike green, Spam, and "Lili Marlene" as the setting in the hospitality room. Then at our annual banquet, we will be honored by having General George S. Patton's family with us. This must be a must for all you Third Army vets!!

I hope you will make your plans to be with us. It will be a great time. I want to thank our Chairman, Past President Stan Wojtusik, Vice President for Military Affairs, and his committee, Past President George Chekan, Editor of *The Bulge Bugle*, and John McAuliffe, President of the Central Massachusetts Chapter, for their unselfish work in putting the reunion together.

One of the success stories we'll be reporting at the reunion will



Louis Cunningham

be the approval we have received from the United States Senate and the House of Representatives to place a more visible monument to our battle in Arlington Cemetery. Our monument committee spent hours in traveling to Washington and tramping the halls of Congress to get the needed Joint Congressional Resolution that smoothed the way for the new monument. We are deeply grateful for the support we received from Congressman Chris Smith (NJ) and Senators Arlen Specter (PA) and Jay Rockefeller (WVA), whose staffs shepherded the resolution through Congress.

Once again, our thanks to George Chekan, Stan Wojtusik, Jack Hyland, Vice President of Public Affairs, and associate member Edith Knowles, of the Delaware Valley Chapter. Together, they proved to be a committee which wouldn't take "NO" for an answer--and got it turned into a "YES." Teamwork did it, because our chapters around the country bombarded their Senators and Representatives to get the Joint Resolution passed. We worked together in the Ardennes, and we proved we could do it again almost six decades later.

I am also happy to report that we have been adding new recruits to our ranks. That is in a large way thanks to our Vice President for Chapters George Fisher (also President of the Southeast Florida Chapter). When George's chapter held their 58th anniversary luncheon, they had a turnout of 250 from all parts of Florida. When George met a member from the St. Petersburg area, he persuaded him to think about a chapter in his area, and the result--a new chapter named the Florida West Coast Chapter. Congratulations to George, and a warm welcome to the members of our newest chapter.

That's the great thing about our organization--it is always a pleasure to visit one of our chapters because one always feels at home. I know I felt that way during my recent visit to the Reading, Pennsylvania, Chapter. President Sam Scales and his members gave me a warm welcome and I can away deeply impressed by their enthusiasm and dedication. They continue to reach out to the community and help keep alive the memory of our victory in the Ardennes.

In closing, I would like to return our thoughts to the opening of this message. I hope that we, as veterans of the largest land battle ever fought by the U.S. Army, will show our support for today's service men and women by flying our flags at home. And while there are misguided Americans demonstrating in the streets while our soldiers are fighting in the desert, I hope that we who know what they are going through, will thank them publicly as individuals when our paths cross while shopping, or at the train or bus station or airport.

Let's let them know we are behind them--and we are praying for them that they, too, may return home safely to their families when victory is won.■

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

SPECIAL NOTICE

WE HAVE RECEIVED SEVERAL LETTERS FROM THE STATES AND ABROAD REGARDING THE WAR IN IRAQ, PRESIDENT BUSH, ETC., ETC., BOTH GOOD AND BAD. WE PRAY FOR OUR SOLDIERS' SAFE RETURN, BUT, BEYOND THAT, WE DO NOT BECOME INVOLVED IN POLITICAL ISSUES AND SUCH LETTERS WILL NOT BE PRINTED OR ANSWERED.

9TH ARMORED DIVISION SURVIVING VEHICLE

A few months ago, Camille Kohn, knowledgeable and indefatigable president of Luxembourg's "Conseil des Etudes de la Bataille des Ardennes" (CEBA), discovered a 1945 photo of a knocked out M4 tank taken near the old castle in Clervaux, Luxembourg, with vehicle ID, although faint, plainly showing "9 2, C 2" indicating its assignment to C Company, 2nd Tank Battalion, 9th Armored Division. The tank was still a dozen meters from where it was knocked out on December 17-18, 1944, when C Company was valiantly trying to defend Clervaux from the 2nd SS Panzer Division. It was incorrectly identified as being assigned to the wrong organization.

As far as is known, this is the only combat vehicle which can be definitely associated with the 9th Armored Division and obviously is of considerable historical interest. CEBA and the 9th Armored vets are in the process of developing plans to erect a memorial plaque to be mounted next to the tank.

Proposed Plaque Wording: This US Army M4 tank, once assigned to Company B, 20 Tank Battalion, 9th Armored Division--only known surviving combat vehicle of the Division--was put out of action Dec 17-18, 1944, while defending Clervaux, only a dozen meters from where it now stands.

George Ruhlen
9 ARMDD 3 AFA BN

WRONG NAME

I would like to thank you for printing my story "Once in A Lifetime," in the February, 2003 issue of *The Bulge Bugle*.

There is one mistake, in that my name is Anthony Korte, not Andrew as shown on the article on page 17.

Anthony A. Korte
3 ARMDD 36 AIR F

...[IT] WILL BE A BARGAIN

I enclose my check for \$75 for the payment of my life time dues. I will be 80 in a couple of months, but I think I am going to defy the odds and \$75 will be a bargain.

I was a navigator on a B-17, bombing Germany from England in 1944--30 combat missions, including several flown during the Battle of the Bulge. As you know, we had a difficult time getting off the ground from the 16th of December until the 24th, but on that Christmas Eve we finally made it big time. Our group bombed the rail yards at Koblenz, and were part of the largest air arcade ever to fly--more than 2,000 heavy bombers from the 8th Air Force (B-17's and B-24's), hundreds of light bombers and also hundreds of fighter aircraft, mostly P-51's and P-47's. We like to think that the Army Air Corps played a significant role in relieving Bastogne and halting the counter attack the Germans had begun on the 16th of December. I finished my missions on the 1st of February, 1945, remained in the Air Force for nearly 32 years.

My wife and I live in Florida during the winter and in Luxembourg during the summer (she is a native Luxembourger). I have been privileged to serve as escort for hundreds of WWII veterans who come back to Luxembourg where they fought so valiantly during the Battle of the Bulge. I am a member of both CEBA and Luxembourg Friends of U.S. Veterans. These two organizations do a fantastic job of welcoming veterans back to Luxembourg and have made them all more than welcome. The Luxembourgers have demonstrated time and time again that they stand

beside the United States and will never forget that the freedom they enjoy was preserved by the Americans, in WWI and in WWII. They will never forget!

John B. Parker
8 USAF 457 BOMB GP 749 BOMB SQD

A LITTLE HELP NEEDED...

...another great issue of *The Bugle* this month....

Most importantly, the "President's Message" included plans underway for the 60th anniversary, in the U.S. and in Europe, in observance of the BoB. Time is already short to accomplish this, but isn't there some way we could get Steven Spielberg/Tom Hanks (et al) to do a movie about the Bulge? There have been some great ones: "Battleground" (1949) and the HBO series on "Band of Brothers"--but there have been some terrible ones, too, as you (the movie called "Battle of the Bulge" is one of several that come to mind).

I'm only hoping that someone: [perhaps one of the Executive Council, staff or the California chapters] could get this going before it's too late.

I'm not telling you anything, but most VBOB members know the BoB wasn't won by great strategy and long-range planning and intelligence (certainly not the latter) but by individual mice and groups of mice, fighting with whatever handfuls of men and ammo they could find, muster and improvise. That story (other than in a few good TV documentaries) has never really been told. And, please, no offense to the 101st Airborne, but a whole lot more went into the BoB victory than their wonderful courage and ability. It's just that the whole, real, complete story of the individual courage and heroism has never really been shown in a nationally-released movie in years!

Enough! I tried to call Spielberg, personally, but couldn't even get a listed telephone number for Dreamworks in LA! Thanks for listening....

L. C. (Pat) Murphy
78 INF D HQ

[If anyone can help with this suggestion, please give it a try. While we have mounds of information in the office which could go to such an effort, the story needs to be told first-hand by those who lived this ordeal.]

FALLING SHORT

While looking through a copy of the chronological history of our 87th Chemical Mortar Battalion, there was an entry that some of our rounds had fallen short onto our own infantry. The resulting investigation showed that the powder rings were defective. We were supporting the 39th Regiment of the 9th Infantry Division at the time but I have never heard of any repercussions from this incident.

On another tract, the mention of Quincy, Massachusetts, brings me to mention that I had an ancestor named John Barr (from my mother's side) who fought in the Revolutionary War under a captain named George Bush!!

R. Keith Ostrum
87 CHEM MTR BN

IT CHANGED THE MEANING

I am honored that you published my article "A Smile During the Bulge," in February, 2003, page 28.

One word which was omitted in the transcribing of my article--sixth paragraph, fourth line, should read: "ordered to attach with them."

The omission of the word "with" changes the meaning of the sentence. ...hope, before my few buddies who are still living hang me, you will publish a correction in the next issue.

Frank P. Leathers
80 INF D 317 INF B

[Sorry, Frank. Sometimes it's tough proofreading your own work and my old eyes ain't what they used to be.]

OBTAINING YOUR MEDALS

This is in reference to the problems that our comrades have in obtaining their medals. I know what they are going through. When you are dealing with the lower ranks of the Veterans Bureau, you get stone-walled on

(Continued on next page)

every turn, with no explanation or reason. I had applied for my medals for approximately seven years and never got anywhere. Finally, as a last resort, I turned to my House of Representatives and Senators for help. Needless to say, I not only got letters from their offices telling what was being done, but with 44 days I had received my medals.

I have often read how the people in the St. Louis office always come up with the fire that destroyed a lot of records. Yes, there were records destroyed but there are other places where information can be obtained.

My suggestions to you is to gather all the information you have and write to your Representative and both Senators. When you write to them (include your discharge and any other important information), tell them the whole story. Don't be afraid of offending anyone. These people work for you and that is why they are in office--to serve the people. Don't let them forget it. You'll be surprised how fast they react.

Also send a copy to: Commander PERSCOM; Attn: TAPC-PDO-PA; 200 Stovall Street; Alexandria, Virginia 22332-0471.

Ralph A. Fiorio
8 ARMDD 18 TK BN

THE VALUE OF MONUMENTS

If you read the history of the G.A.R. (Grand Army of the Republic) you will find that it was strong after the Civil War. But, after filling up the landscape with monuments, they promptly went out of business. Wealthy monument builders [were] fat and happy.

Unfortunately, I believe this is our destiny for, from what I can see, the organization has no agenda other than the above.

I served in infantry, saw the bodies leave the field stacked on the back of jeeps, and was almost killed on three occasions so I did see and was a part of up front brutality.

Our newsletter is great well thought out and put together. But, just one agenda. If this organization is to survive it must be multifaceted and member oriented. When I saw in a national publication a picture of a group of dignitaries as a part the WWII monument effort. I was surprised to see one of our officers as a part of this group. I would ask why wasn't the membership asked if they felt this should go forward or if they agreed or disagreed. At that point I decided that my voice wasn't consulted. I'm a reasonably intelligent person for my 80 years and I felt that I could and would have given an honest vote for "no" monument.

We have, believe, one of the world's best known tributes to the men and women of WWII already. It has been related to the entrance of Ft. Meyers and not too frequently seen. Rather than build a behemoth on the mall and destroy an already beautiful place, we will end up with a "Disney World" look and make G.C.'s [general contractors] more wealthy and political hacks even happier. This monument could be moved on to a well landscaped area of the mall at a modest cost and get away from "Disney World" theme park look. The membership should have been consulted.

Howard F. Reiff
76 INF 385 INF 1 BN HQ

ALSACE (BATTLE OF THE BULGE?)

In reply to the enclosed letter from Comrade Robert J. Phillips, I want to express my disappointment in his remarks.

After more than 50 years, we veterans of the Alsace portion of the Battle of Ardennes-Alsace were delighted when we were welcomed into the VBOB organization. We thought that we were finally going to receive the recognition of our feats in Alsace, after being forgotten for those more than 50 years.

Why were we welcomed into VBOB if we weren't going to receive the recognition we deserve? Regardless of how the battle star for those operations were arrived at, that star still reads Ardennes-Alsace. I know they were two separate operations, but the German objective was to defeat our forces and prolong the war, until they could develop the Atom Bomb and use it against us and thus win the war. Our brave forces in the Ardennes and in Alsace thwarted those dreams and because of our victories made the rest of WWII a piece of cake.

As a combat wounded combat veteran of the battle in Alsace, I am proud of what we did and again appeal for the recognition we deserve.

LETTER FROM ROBERT PHILLIPS

Dear Mr. Diglio:

Your letter has been turned over to me, one of the historians with the Battle of the Bulge, to answer your question regarding why the VBOB logo doesn't read Ardennes-Alsace instead of just Ardennes. The reason is that these two battles were separate operations. General Devers, 6th Army Group commander, asked General George Marshall, US Army Chief of Staff, to create another battle star for the Alsace operation as their's was also a very tough battle and though not of the same magnitude as the Ardennes, was a very hard fought operation and was very instrumental in contributing to Germany's final defeat. General Marshall said "no", we do not need another battle star, let's do it this way, and wrote on a piece of paper "Ardennes-Alsace". General Devers was not happy about this decision, but having served with General Marshall for many years, knew General Marshall did not appreciate having his decisions questioned. To do so could have a great impact on an officer's promotions and assignments and could even bring about early retirement. And so the matter was dropped. While the two operations share a battle star they were separate operations.

This is not the first time such a decision was made. Algeria-French Morocco is another example. The invasion of Algeria took place on the Mediterranean coast, the French Moroccan invasion on the Atlantic coast, 300 miles apart. Naples-Foggia in Italy is another example. One on the west coast of Italy, the other on the east coast. And to make it more interesting, there were no U.S. troops in the Foggia area, only British. Also in Italy was the Rome-Arno campaign. The units that fought in the Rome part of the campaign didn't all fight in the Arno River part of the campaign and the units that fought in the Arno area didn't all fight in the Rome part of the battle. And to further complicate the matter the Anzio operations area was taken out of the Rome-Arno campaign and made a separate Anzio campaign with its own battle star. There is no excuse why Alsace could not have had its own battle star, but we will probably never know why General Marshall made the decision he did.

Incidentally, at the end of the Ardennes fighting the Third Army did not help the Seventh Army in turning back the Germans. They did not take over part of the front they manned before going north to the Ardennes, but that's all. The 101st Airborne did come down in mid-January and man part of the Moder River line, but only performed aggressive patrolling operations for a time. The Seventh Army along with the French First Army were the ones who pushed the Germans out of Alsace.

The Alsace units, therefore, were not veterans of the Battle of the Bulge any more than the Ardennes units were veterans of the Nordwind operation. Thus the Battle of the Bulge veterans do not feel there is any reason to change their logo.

I am sending you a small booklet the U.S. Army Center of Military History has published on the Ardennes-Alsace campaign. This is one of a series the Center has published on each WWII campaign. Read pages 37-43 and pages 48-52 for the role of the Seventh Army units in Operation Nordwind. The official U.S. Army history of WWII, "From The Riviera To The Rhine" by Jeffrey Clarke and Robert Ross Smith also has a good account of all aspects of the Alsace operation.

Sincerely ours,
Robert F. Phillips

Michael J. DiGlio
42 INF 242 INF B

THE ROLE OF THE RAILROADS

In your analysis of the German Bulge offensive, you failed to mention the main reason for its initial success--the German railroad system. The Allies couldn't believe the Germans could amass such a large amount of men and material after their tremendous losses during the summer and early fall of 1944.

We dropped countless thousands of tons of bombs on their rail system and never put its vital lines out of service for more than 24 hours. The surprise of December 16th produced a force of 300,000 men, 1,400 tanks, 100 trains of ammo, sufficient gas and all supplies for their massive failed mission.

(Continued on next page)

ARMED FORCES MUSEUM

I would like to call your attention to the Armed Forces Museum located at Camp Shelby, Highway 49, just south of Hattiesburg, Mississippi. It has displays of WWII, Vietnam, Desert Storm, Medal of Honor Awards, and many other displays.

It's well worth your time to visit this museum.

J. J. Befort
87 INF 345 INF B

QUESTIONS ANSWERED

Many thanks for printing the "Battle of the Bulge Intelligence" report in the February, 2003, edition of *The Bulge Bugle*. It answered all the questions I had:

1. SHAEF's G-2 underestimating the German Army's strength.
2. First Army's 88 mile front with four divisions.
3. No real G-2 from "mid-September to December 16." That's 75 days!! I can't believe we couldn't have aerial photography during that entire period.
4. Finally, we "extended no ground reconnaissance." That's a basic, basic flaw. Where is the enemy?

I hope this is all entered into the War College's manuals.

Bottom line, General Bradley's decision to keep the Ardennes front thinly defended = one lost division.

Don Socher
Associate Member

(LETTERS TO THE EDITOR- (continued on page 29))

A Message from the Belgian War Veterans for their American Friends

Paul Goffin, the co-chairman of the American Belgian Commemorative Committee for the 50th Anniversary of the Korean War, received through email a copy of Raymond Behr's speech made on March 3, 2003 to the annual meeting of the Royal Association of the Belgian War Crosses in Hasselt, Belgium.

Raymond Behr, headed the 20 man Korean War Veterans delegation of Belgians at the Commemorative Ceremony for the 50th Korean War Anniversary last September 2002 in Washington D. C. He wanted his message distributed to as many of his American friends as possible "to convince them", as he put it, "that the Belgian War Veterans have a different opinion regarding peace than their politicians

Dear Friends,

A few days ago I asked our President Julien Van Cauwelaert (Korean War Veterans Association and, also, President of the Royal Association of War Crosses - membership about 1.000) what kind of message I should convey at the annual meeting of the Belgian War Crosses. He thought that the ideas developed in the article of Colonel De Groot, recently publicized in the bulletin of the "WAR CROSS" were most appropriate. So, I followed his advice. Today, we witness our compatriots enjoying democratic freedoms as if these were natural and unalienable.

They do not seem to realize that the "freedom capital" was acquired through the large sacrifices of thousands of patriots and through the armies of our loyal allies fighting dictatorial occupations. I think, at this moment, particularly of our comrades in arms who have made the ultimate sacrifice,

their lives, the posthumously honored War Crosses of the 1940-1945 and the Korean Wars.

The debt that we owe those who have given their lives, can only be repaid by showing our continued gratitude and by maintaining the acquired "capital" against tyranny and terrorism for the well being of our children and grandchildren.

Should those, who have offered their lives, ask us today how we have accounted and protected that so dearly acquired capital, we must point, with disappointment, towards some of the political representatives of our country and of Europe who are responsible for the threatening corrosion of the defensive shield which symbolizes "NATO-SOLIDARITY".

The European countries are not only divided and undecided and without adequate understanding over the combat against world terrorism and the protection against weapons of mass destruction of dictatorships according to their particular interests, but also to a wobbling foreign policy which is strongly influenced by electoral propaganda.

Governments are only mirroring the illusion of peace to our mediatized population. Yet, in the past, we have experienced the consequences of such a dubious division and, particularly, the failure of allied solidarity.

In the thirties, Belgium opted for neutrality rather than solidarity with its Allies of World War I. This choice was the result of the failure to enforce the Locarno Treaty. According to the treaty, the Allied Forces should have stopped the German Army when they occupied the left bank of the Rhine River.

On March 7, 1936 on Hitler's command, the German Army occupied the left bank of the Rhine and thereby breached the Versailles Treaty.

There was no intervention by the Allies, not because of disagreement but rather they decided to await, through diplomatic channels, the decision of the League of Nations.

The League of Nations condemned Germany. That was all. Yet, Hitler, had secretly given orders, to recall its troops should the Allies have intervened.

The League of Nations resolution contained sanctions. Should one member not respect its obligations, it would be considered an act of war against all other members, which in turn should immediately cut off all trade and financial relations. Accordingly the Counsel should decide the contribution in land and sea forces each member country should make to form the combat force to enforce the League of Nations resolution.

The war of 1940 - 45 could have been prevented had the Allies enforced the Locarno Treaty.

Today, 60 years later, we hear again voices that beg not to follow our Allies and liberators of 1914 - 1918, and 1940 - 1945, and the winners of the cold war in their combat against those who threaten our security and the world peace. Sometimes, force is necessary to bring an end to tyranny and prevent greater disaster.

Every one of us, each person without exception, chooses peace against war. This makes it attractive for irresponsible politicians to criticize those who are fighting and want to ban weapons of mass destruction from dictatorships.

It is easy for a politician to play the peace activist card, his electoral success is secured. But the peace he proposes is a mirage, never has peace activism brought peace, it's a mermaids song that leads to oppression and war. It has always been combatants from democratic countries that restored peace and eliminated wars.

We hope that the European politicians, if not too late, remember the shortcomings of the Locarno Treaty, and remain faithful to the Western solidarity and NATO.

This is our greatest opportunity to avoid another world war and not to sacrifice again thousands of lives for "Peace and Freedom"

Raymond Behr

COVER STORY - TRIBUTE TO BILL MALDIN

The Bulge Bugle wishes to thank **MICHAEL PETRICK, 87TH INFANTRY DIVISION, 346TH INFANTRY REGIMENT, COMPANY M**, for the "Remembrance" to Bill Maldin, which appears on the front cover of this issue.

As you may know Bill passed away January 22, 2003, after a long battle with Alzheimer's Disease.

Several members visited or corresponded with him before he passed away and we pass on to you their recollections.

Fred Whitaker, 87th Infantry Division, 346th Infantry Regiment, Company M: It was easy to visit with Bill Maldin because I now live very close. Following a couple of articles in the Orange County Register, I called Gordon Dillow, the columnist, and he cleared the way for a visit. When I came into the upscale rest home, Bill was part of a large group, who were listening to songs and participating in whatever limited way that was possible. The nurses aided Bill back to his room while I followed.

Due to Bill's incapacity to speak I had to carry the conversation. While this may seem frustrating, consider this--there is a certain satisfaction to telling stories and not being interrupted! I shared some of my experiences with a humorous twist, like the time my first sergeant borrowed some money (a previous division) and then after my 30-day furlough shipped me out to Fort Jackson. I am sure his check will be in the mail soon. This and other stories brought forth a smile or a nod of understanding.

Bill was the epitome of the resilience and humor of the American soldier. *[Information for Fred's visit was excerpted from the 87th's newsletter--"The Golden Acorn News-March, 2003.]*

Vernon Greene, 78th Infantry Division, 311 Infantry, Company M, from Fayetteville, North Carolina, submitted a copy of his local newspaper to the 78th Division's newsletter *The Flash* which related excerpts from various vets. The article was written by Chelsea J. Carter and we provide you a few [largely edited] excerpts from the article:

"...letters came by the thousands, from soldiers who survived World War II and the widows of those who did not. They came from children who had never seen war and soldiers embroiled in today's fight against terrorism. Some were personal notes, sharing stories of survival and redemption with a man they never met. Others offered thanks to a man who brought laughter in dark times.

"...Jay Gruenfeld, 77, heard from Maldin's son that he was not doing well. I heard that and said, 'Well, I have to go see him,' who days later made the four-hour drive from his home.... He spent hours with Maldin, telling stories about the war and the life after.

"He smiled this big, beautiful smile,' he said. 'You have to understand, Maldin was just a paragon for us. ...He needed to know he wasn't forgotten.'

"Gruenfeld returned home from that trip last spring with an idea: Get other veterans to write letters and visit. He wrote to veterans' organizations and contacted newspaper columnists. The word spread. Soon Maldin was receiving hundreds of letters a day.

"Ed Trumble, 78, of Boulder, Colorado, shared his story of survival during the Battle of the Bulge in 1944, one of

the bloodiest battles of the war. He told Mauldin how he and a buddy had just read a cartoon in which Willie and Joe were under enemy fire and one said to the other: 'They are trying to kiss us today.' We were under an artillery attack and my buddy was digging in right beside me and he said, 'Well, Trumble, they are trying to kiss us both today.'

"Letters, cards, and drawings covered the walls and ceiling of Bill Maldin's room at the convalescent home. For months, his son, Nat Mauldin, read letters to his father standing at his bedside. Bill Maldin mostly remained silent.

"On a recent visit, Nat Mauldin, 49, picked through a stack of mail at the foot of his father's bed.

"'Hey, Dad, this looks like a good one,' he said.

"The letter is postmarked Tucson, Arizona. It's from John S. Barker, 78, who as a corporal served in Italy during the war.

"Nat read: 'Dear Mr. Maldin, I have half-a-dozen grandsons, all in their early 20's and all members of that generation that guesses December 7, 1941, is somebody's birthday. Anzio is a viral disease and Cassino is a card game. They've asked about the war but I lack the skills to make it come alive for them.'

"Barker said he recently began trying to explain his war experiences to his grandchildren by using Willie and Joe cartoons.

"'They are beginning to get insights into the personal side of war, insights that might just work to minimize their chances of getting caught up in a similar adventure,' the letter said.

"Nat put the letter down, looked at his father, and asked if he was feeling OK.

"'Yeah,' Bill Mauldin said. The son beamed at the first word he'd drawn from his father in months.

"It was one of four responses that day as the elder Mauldin heard more veterans' letters. Later, Nat pondered whether it was just a brief, random moment of clarity or whether the letters, the memories, helped break through.

"'Whatever it was,' he said, 'I'll take it.'"

So, if you're one of the ones who dropped him a note when we recently told you about his condition, you'll be glad to know that you may have brought him a little cheer as he had done so many times for you at a time when you needed it so badly.

Bill wrote 16 books and won two Pulitzer Prizes. He once met the wrath of General Patton himself for a cartoon he had drawn, but he didn't let that stop him from bringing you something to get a chuckle from.

[From the Editor: I am sure many of you have a favorite "Willie and Joe" cartoon and will reflect upon it as you read this article. Bill had a way of capturing a moment we could all relate to. We will continue to carry "Willie and Joe" cartoons in this newsletter. We'd like to say to Bill: Rest in peace and thanks for the wonderful comic relief you provided us then and now.]

Kilroy says...

**"SIGN UP A NEW MEMBER...
DO IT TODAY!"**

In Remembrance Of Bill Mauldin

Dear Bill:

Enclosed is a cartoon in remembrance of Bill Mauldin. It was drawn by George Fisher, a personal friend of mine who was also a good friend of Mauldin's. They had attended several editorial cartoonists' conventions and had had several meals together. It appeared in our newspaper here last week and has been widely praised.

If you choose to use it in The Flash, George told me you have his permission to do so. Hope it reproduces OK.

George was a dogface in the 76th Division, and we have swapped many war stories. Of course you recall the Mauldin cartoon about the two officers standing on a bluff, overlooking a beautiful valley. One says: "This is a great view. Is there one lower down for the enlisted men?"

Best regards,

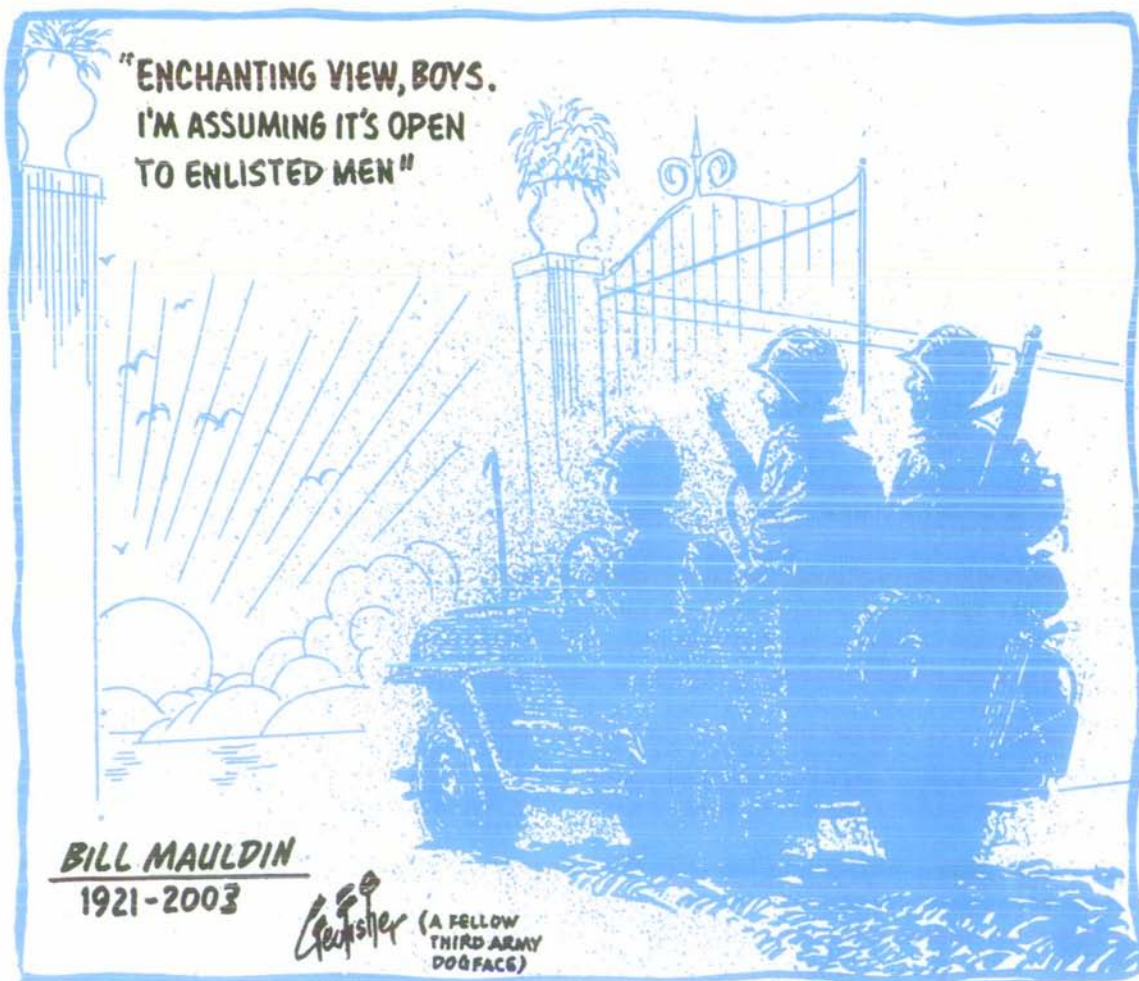
Pat Murphy

78 Div HQ

14 Longlea Dr.

Little Rock AR 72212-2752

The Cartoon Follows:



MEMBERS SPEAK OUT

LEE H. STOWASSER, 1262ND ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION, would like to meet with any Bulge veterans who live in his area. Contact him at: 36 Pembroke Road, Montgomery, Illinois 60538-2037. *[Since we don't have a chapter in this area, if enough of you get together and want to form a chapter, let us know. We'll help you get organized.]*

WILLIAM F. OLIVER, 3RD ARMORED DIVISION, 32ND ARMORED INFANTRY REGIMENT, COMPANY H, would like to hear from anyone in his area: Contact him at: 124 Park Avenue, Vestal, New York 13850.

KENNETH HUMMEL, 8TH ARMORED DIVISION, 36TH TANK BATTALION, COMPANY B, wants to see if someone can provide an article about the 8th Armored. He reads the newsletter but never hears about the 8th. You can contact Ken at: 2 Chisholm Lane, Council Bluffs, Iowa 51503.

JOHN DANNIBALE, 28TH INFANTRY DIVISION, 110TH INFANTRY REGIMENT, COMPANY D, would like to hear from anyone who served with him. He would also like to hear from anyone with **HEADQUARTERS, MANCHU REGIMENT, 2ND INFANTRY DIVISION**, at Fort Lewis, Washington. Write to John at: 2937 Wellington Avenue, Schenectady, New York 12306.

Bruce Frederick writes to ask if anyone can provide information about the **202ND GENERAL HOSPITAL**. Bruce's mother served in the Army Nurse Corps as a lieutenant. She tended to avoid discussion of her service in the ETO. His father served in the **6TH ARMORED DIVISION** and shared his experiences. If you can help, write to Bruce at: PO Box 1034, Burlington, Massachusetts 01803.

HARVEY A. JORGENSEN, 78TH INFANTRY DIVISION, 311TH INFANTRY REGIMENT, 3RD BATTALION, COMPANY K, would like some help in locating a video of a one-hour program which appeared on one of the educational channels. It was not a reenactment of the battle but was a compilation of actual movies taken of war activities at the time of the BoB. If you can help him with information on obtaining a copy, write to him at: 1398 East Wisdom Lane, Springfield, Missouri 65804-7922.

REXFORD D. MILLER, 3RD ARMORED DIVISION, 33RD ARMORED INFANTRY REGIMENT, is interested in locating a copy of the book, "The Battle of the Bulge." If you can help him, write to him at: 1805 Bellaire Circle, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73160-4612.

NATIONAL ORDER OF BATTLEFIELD COMMISSIONS is trying to locate all men, WWII, Korea and Vietnam, who on the field of battle against an armed enemy received a commission from enlisted or Warrant status to commission status. Contact: J. Angier, 67 Ocean Drive, St. Augustine, Florida 32080.

JOHN T. WORTHINGTON, 295TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION, COMPANY B, would like to advise any soldier

or family member of same in the ETO (WWII from June 1944 to May 1945) and were in the 295th Engineer Combat Battalion and sending money back to Battalion Headquarters to be sent to their family, may have monies available from the Adjutant General's Office for small claims department at the Pentagon in Virginia. This money would be yours--the money was lost in an occupied German town due to a motorcycle accident. The courier who was killed in the accident was taking the money back to Battalion Headquarters of the XIX Corp to be put in your savings account. I made a claim for \$75.00 which I lost and received it back in 1946 from the above source. I was told that the amount of money at that time which had not been claimed was \$6,000. If they pay interest, you or your family may find moneys you never received. If you have questions, write to John at: 3118 Gracefield Road #CC-203, Silver Spring, Maryland 20904.

Robert J. Clark, is an American Indian doing research on WWII for a future article or book. He's looking for information on various topics, i.e., experiences of all ethnicities, creeds, etc.; information on animals used in service; dating, romance, etc.; unusual experiences or phenomena; knowing an American Indian or Hawaiian; and/or women who served in defense industries or Civil Air Patrol. If you can provide Robert some information, write to him at: PO Box 685, Collinsville, Illinois 62234.

RAY V. BRASSARD, 774TH TANK DESTROYER BATTALION, has been trying to find his WWII buddy Louis Dumon, whose last address was in Warren, Michigan. Write to him at: 515 Lake Winnimeset Drive, Deland, Florida 32724.

John Wasglov is seeking information regarding his father, **MIKE WASGLOW**, who served as a tanker in the **9TH ARMORED DIVISION** during the Bulge and other subsequent campaigns. If you can help, write to John at: 2106 2nd Avenue North, Grand Forks, North Dakota 58203.

90 AND GOING STRONG

David Saltman, Founder and President of the Long Island Chapter, was presented a special citation on the occasion of his 90th birthday by VBOB Chapter Vice President George Fisher.



Above, left to right: George Fisher and David Saltman.

David's wife, Elaine, states that VBOB keeps David young. Apparently so, he keeps pretty active creating interesting programs and activities for his chapter. ■

CAPTURED IN THE BULGE

by Joseph M. Elek

16th Field Artillery Observation Battalion

[Excerpts] [From Brest] We headed north through Paris then northeast to the Ardennes. We set up operations north of Bastogne near the Luxembourg border, overlooking the Siegfried Line. Malmedy was north of us. We had been observing for several weeks. A German patrol had been watching Baker OP for several days. When the operator went to his dugout to wake up his relief, the patrol stole his instrument and all maps and data. We were ordered to evacuate the area as soon as possible. Within the hour, the Germans laid down a heavy artillery barrage at the OP site. We then moved north to a little village called Auw inside the German border approximately 25 miles south of Malmedy. The town of Prüm was nine miles from us, from which the Germans were launching Buzz Bombs. We were not able to see the launching site, so we did the next best thing. As the Buzz Bombs were launched, all of the OPs would take readings on the bombs and pass it back to the command post. Once the direction of the bombs was plotted, the plots would be relayed to the anti-aircraft gun batteries--many were destroyed. On occasion, our aircraft would pull up along side the Buzz Bomb and try to flip the wings, thereby knocking it off course. One day, one of the bombs did not clear the hill where I was located and crashed into the hill 80 paces from my OP. It did not explode but left a crater approximately 6-8 feet wide and 15-20 feet long. Army intelligence was elated because it was the first Buzz Bomb that was found fairly well intact. We took some of the parts for souvenirs but had to give them back.

We're now in the second week of December 1944. The weather was quite bad--very misty, cold and between 1-1/2 to 2 feet of snow on the ground. A lot of troop movements were going on in the area. The 2nd Infantry Division was being relieved by the 106th Infantry Division which was fresh from the U.S. and had no combat experience. Also, English-speaking Germans were infiltrating our lines to the point where we were ordered to run anyone down who tried to flag us down.

Because of the length of time we had been in combat, R&R passes were being offered to Arlon and Saint-Vith, Belgium. Due to the weather conditions, I turned mine down and replaced the OP observer who had gone in my place. Mid-morning of the 16th of December, as I was getting ready to go forward and take my position on the new OP, all hell broke loose. The Germans started to lay down a very heavy artillery barrage. We were in a heavily wooded pine tree area. I dove behind the largest tree I could find, hugging the ground. Artillery shells and shrapnel were flying all over. I felt fairly comfortable when I heard both the shells and shrapnel. It was the ones you couldn't hear that really worried us. This was the start of the Battle of the Bulge!

When the barrage let up slightly, I started to retrace my route to the command post. When I arrived, everyone was gone. For the next three days, I kept retreating to the rear. I was finally captured with several hundred other GI's, mostly from the 106th Infantry Division. I had serious thoughts of going it alone but feared that if I had been captured, I would no doubt have been shot--since the Germans had a bad habit of not taking any prisoners. For example, while doing research on the Battle of the Bulge after the war, I learned that the 285th Artillery Observation Battalion had been captured at Maimeidy and

massacred on the 17th of December. A very few did survive. I was captured on the 19th of December, 1944.

IMPRISONMENT

The following represents our treatment during imprisonment. Subsequent to our capture, we were marched to a large courtyard on a farm. The courtyard was surrounded by a four-foot wall. We were searched for weapons, all our personal belongings and extra clothing were taken and a count of prisoners was taken. We were warned that for each escaped prisoner, 15 prisoners would be shot. We were confined to the courtyard all night, and either stood or sat in the deep snow. The following morning, we started to march to the nearest railhead, which was over 25 miles away. Ours was the largest group of Americans the Germans had captured to date. We numbered close to 1,000. As we started to march, we took turns carrying the sick and wounded, since no medical attention has been provided.

As we passed through small villages, the civilians, who had never seen Americans before, shouted obscenities, spit on us and ran between the ranks and punched us. In another village, a woman gave us some rutabagas, which the guards let us eat. Some of us who had canteens would break ranks and run to ditches where water had accumulated. We all carried water purification tablets. When the tablets dissolved in the water, the water was supposed to be fit to drink. Most of us had not had anything to eat or drink in five days. Since we had marched several miles, my feet were getting tired, so I removed my overshoes. They were quickly taken by the guards.

The following morning, we arrived at the railhead. We were joined by many other American prisoners who had been on the march for five days without any food or water. We were fed a very substandard meal. Since we had no utensils, we ate out of our helmets or anything else which would hold food. After our meal, we were herded into boxcars like cattle.

The boxcars that we were put in were called 40s and 8s. They were meant to carry 40 German soldiers and eight horses. The German guards were putting from 60 to 75 prisoners to a car. We had 75 in ours. We took turns sitting and standing so that we could rest. Those standing would stand straddle-legged to make room for those sitting. We broke holes in the floors of the cars to use as toilets. All jokes, mostly dirty, were symptomatic of anxiety and frustration--we were experiencing both.

On Christmas Day the sun broke through. It was the first clear day long before the Battle of the Bulge had started. We could hear airplanes flying above. Suddenly, we stopped in an open field; the engine was uncoupled and took off. The guards ran into the nearby fields in order to get out of harm's way. Since the beginning of the war in Europe, the allies bombed and strafed all forms of German transportation to try to immobilize the Germans. Our engine and boxcars were no exception, since they were not marked in any way to signify that they were carrying human cargo--as they should have been. Suddenly, four P-47 fighters started to bomb and strafe our boxcars. The men who were closest to the vents--which were near the top and in diagonal corners of each car--ripped wires which covered the vents and started waving their arms and some of their clothing as the airplanes flew by. It seemed to work, but by this time they had hit several cars. To make matters worse, the guards in the field were shooting into the cars in order to prevent anyone from trying to escape. It was assumed that the pilots had realized that the cars contained human cargo, because they stopped strafing and bombing.

(Continued on next page)

CAPTURED ★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

A short time later, the engine reappeared, and we continued our journey. The day after Christmas, we arrived at the main train terminal in Frankfurt-am-Main. We heard our bombers overhead, and we feared the station--it wasn't. After five days, we arrived in Bad Orb, where Stalag IX-B was located.

The prison camp was located on a high hill, several miles from the railroad. The area around Bad Orb was mountainous and heavily wooded. After we arrived at the camp, we were herded into a large compound. One by one, we were interrogated, finger-printed, photographed for mug shots and then were given German dog tags. During our interrogation, the Germans insisted on knowing our occupation as civilians before we were inducted into the army. I told them that I had been a student. I wasn't about to tell them I had worked a machine shop for fear I would be put to work in one of their factories as slave labor.

All officers, non-coms, privates and anyone that was a Jew or looked like a Jew and couldn't convince the Germans otherwise, were separated and put into separate barracks without any food or water. This procedure lasted until after dark. The following morning, we were fed for the second time in 14 days. Meanwhile, I had developed a severe throat infection and was very concerned about what would happen to me because up to this point we had not had any medical attention. Fortunately, one of the prisoners was a medic and still had his medical kit, which contained some sulphur tablets. He gave me some and may have saved my life. Unfortunately, I never got his name.

The Germans allowed us to visit some of the other barracks. While searching for others from my outfit, I noticed a familiar face. He was huddled next to a wood-burning stove, even though we did not have any heat in any of the barracks. This individual had the word ZEKE printed across one of his fatigue pockets. We looked at each other and I said "Ernie, is that you?" "Yes" he said, "what the hell are you doing here?" Ernie Slavcsak and I lived around the corner from each other. We both had mothers who were widows and one sister. Also, we had gone to school together. He had been with the 106th Infantry Division and had been captured close to where I had been. We both agreed that if we had an opportunity to write any letters home, we would mention that we were alive and POWs.

About a week or so after we arrived at Bad Orb, it was rumored that the Swiss Red Cross was going to visit and inspect our camp. Before they arrived, we were fed an extra ration. The Germans put on a real dog-and-pony show. We were not allowed to talk to any member of the delegation. After the Swiss left, it was business as usual.

Slowly but surely the Germans started to ship the POWs to various camps around Germany and further inland. Up to this point, we had been at Bad Orb for about a month. Finally, over a thousand of us, all non-coms, were to be moved. We again boarded boxcars without any food and water, and three days later arrived in Ziegenhain south of Kassel. Stalag IX-A was located several miles from the town. Upon arrival, we were again interrogated, our German dog tags were checked and we were assigned to barracks without any food, water or heat. Our bunks were triple-deckers, 36 inches wide, with wooden slats instead of springs. Our mattresses were made of burlap sacks which were stuffed with excelsior which was fine wood shavings normally used to package fragile items. In order to keep warm, during the night, two of us would sleep in one bunk. If at anytime during the night we wanted to change our position, we would have to

wake our bunkmate and then make the change. If we moved around too much during the night, the slats would move out of their places and we would fall on top of the two bunkmates below. Another reason that it was necessary for us to sleep together in order to keep warm was each of us was only issued two blankets measuring 30 x 40 inches long.

Stalag IX-A had well over 3,000 prisoners. In addition to Americans, there were French, Russians, Poles and West French African Senegalese--big guys, 6'1/2 to 7 feet tall. The allies had used the Senegalese in the Italian campaign for light patrols. The Germans hated the blacks since they felt that they were an inferior race. They were assigned to kitchen duties and, paradoxically, got more to eat. Later, we were joined by British and Canadian troops the Germans had marched from the eastern front because of the Russian advances. Their march started with approximately 200 troops; only 100 arrived--the balance died along the way. It is now around the 30th of January, 1945.

Our food at Stalag IX-A consisted of the following:

One liter of soup approximately .94 quarts. Sometimes it contained barley or potatoes but rarely any meat--we could see dead animals being carried into the kitchen which was located next to our barracks. In some cases, it was quite obvious that the animals had been dead for a while.

In addition to soup we received one loaf of black bread, to be divided among six of us. The loaf was approximately 8 inches long. One could tap the slice of bread on the side of one's bunk; the bread would start to fall apart, since 60-70 percent of it was sawdust. Nothing else.

Obviously, we were being starved to death. This is confirmed in a Military Intelligence Service War Department report date 1 November, 1945, which states:

The German rations had a paper value of 1400 calories.

Actually the caloric content was even further lowered by the waste in using products of inferior quality. Since a completely inactive man needs at least 1700 calories to live, it is apparent that POW's were slowly starving to death.

Once, we were given a Red Cross package which had to be divided among six of us. By the rules of the Geneva Convention we were supposed to have a Red Cross package every week. After we were liberated, we found one of the warehouses full of packages the Germans were using for themselves.

Our personal hygiene was virtually nonexistent. We had no toothbrushes or toothpaste. We chewed the ends of pieces of wood in order to make them soft and massage our teeth and gums in this manner. We only had one shower and delousing during our whole time of imprisonment. We were crawling with lice and every other bug imaginable, and our biggest concern was contracting typhus. We were not allowed to have any haircuts, nor did we ever receive a change of underwear. We did, however, receive one shave which was conducted under guard.

Stalag IX-A was run by the SS. Calling the German sergeant over our barracks a sadist would have been a compliment, since he tried everything to make life miserable for us. About six a.m. every morning, he would come through our barracks blowing his whistle and yelling, "rauss oben Scheisskopf," which was quite an obscenity. We would shout obscenities in return, at which time he would pull his Luger and threaten to shoot everyone in sight and would have done so if he could have gotten away with it. Guards around the camp were older men who were not fit for military service. They were physically impaired--poor eyesight, handicapped or of low mentality.

(Continued on next page)

CAPTURED*****

Our toilet facilities were outside and were extremely inadequate for the number of prisoners in the camp. The toilet paper was a slick piece of paper approximately 4 x 6 inches long. For those of us who did not have diarrhea and/or dysentery, it was not too much of a problem, since our bowels only moved about once every four or five days.

By this time, food was an incessant preoccupation. We spent considerable time dreaming up and exchanging recipes, depending on our ethnic background. We also made lists of things we were going to eat once we were liberated. We used our toilet paper for this purpose.

Needless to say, we prayed a lot. Some of the men in our barracks were chaplain's assistants who led us in prayer every day. My mother, who was a Catholic, gave me two items before I left for the army: a small four-page prayer booklet, which she had gotten from a Franciscan monastery and a St. Mary pendant to wear. Both provided me a great deal of comfort during my imprisonment. My faith in God never wavered and has been considerably strengthened by the ordeal.

On the 7th of February 1945, we were allowed to send our first letters home. I had planned to write the letter in Hungarian but was not allowed to do so. I did mention that I had seen Ernie in Stalag IX-B at Bad Orb. This was the first word that his family had received indicating that he was still alive and well.

To date, our barracks had no formal leadership to represent us and also interface with camp officials. We selected a fellow named Phil Glaessner, from New York City. Phil was a Jew; however, he was olive-skinned and could have passed for an Arabian. He was born and reared in Germany, but his family fled Germany in order to escape the Nazi oppression and entered the United States through Canada. Phil knew Germany extremely well and was very knowledgeable of its history.

About the third week of February 1945, a Major Morgan, who was with the 82nd Airborne Division and also a prisoner, appeared on the scene. We were told that he would take command of all American prisoners. At first, we were very suspicious because the Germans had a habit of planting English-speaking Germans among the prisoners in order to ferret out information. He finally convinced us that he was for real and everyone relaxed. Much to our surprise we found that he had smuggled a crystal set and a paratrooper map of the area into the camp. From that time on, we listened to BBC news broadcasts every day and could keep up with the progress of the war.

Also about this time, American and other allied bombers were flying overhead on their way to bomb Kassel and Berlin. We learned that we were in the direct flight path to both cities. It was quite a sight to behold. The number of aircraft involved was unbelievable. As far as the eye could see, from horizon to horizon, aircraft were everywhere. The last wave had not passed overhead before the first wave was returning. Many had large holes in the wings and tail surfaces and, in many cases, engines were not functioning. As the camp commandant walked back and forth in the main aisle of our barracks with Major Morgan, he would look up at the sky and say in perfect English, "Luftwaffe, Luftwaffe, where the hell are you?" As a result of the bombings, and because of the damage that was caused, the Germans had the prisoners form work details which were then transported to Kassel and neighboring towns to help clean up the destruction. This was a complete violation of the Geneva Convention--since we were in poor physical condition. We would

all cut cards to see who would be selected. Fortunately I have never been lucky at cards and was never selected.

As was customary the bombers were escorted by fighter aircraft. One day, a P-51 Mustang fighter broke away from the formation and circled the camp. Whenever aircraft flew overhead, we tried to place SOS panels in the recreation yard. Each time, men would gather around the panels in order to shield them from the guards. While the pilot kept circling, one of the tower guards fired his machine gun at the airplane. The pilot flew off into the distance circled back and fired a machine gun burst at the tower, wiping it out. Unfortunately, several of the rounds hit some of the barracks, wounding some of the prisoners. One of the prisoners, who was standing approximately ten feet from me, had a round go between his left chest wall and his left arm a few inches below his armpit. The bullet tore off the left pocket of his fatigues, but never touched him.

While at Stalag IX-A, several prisoners escaped from our barracks. In all, there were six separate attempts. Each time, a few days later they were brought back dead, put on stretchers and were paraded inside each of the barracks as a warning.

We are now in the fourth week of March, 1945. The radio broadcasts were telling us Americans had crossed the Remagen bridge, which was the only bridge the Germans had not destroyed as they were retreating. As a result, American troops had spread out and were advancing rapidly toward Frankfurt. Realizing that the allied troops were advancing toward Ziegenhain and Kassel, the Germans decided to move us. As we lined up on the recreation field, Major Morgan quietly walked between the ranks and told the weakest among us to start dropping to the ground as we were being led out of the camp. By the time we reached the front gate, many had dropped. The Germans insisted that we pick up and carry those who had fallen, but they finally realized that physically we were not able to do so. We were allowed to return to our barracks. Many tried to hide in the compound, and several lowered themselves into the outdoor latrines.

On the 28th of March, we could see Piper Cub airplanes flying in the distance. Piper Cubs were primarily used for reconnaissance and to direct artillery fire.

When it became obvious that the American troops were very near, the camp commander and his staff decided to make a run for it and left the elderly guards in charge. On the 30th of March, Good Friday, at 3:30 p.m., we were liberated by the 6th Armored Division, Patton's Third Army. As the tank crews drove over the front gate and barbed wire fences, they stopped long enough to survey the situation then dumped most of their rations on the ground and took off. The rations were distributed among the prisoners which was the worst thing that could have happened. Here we were eating C-rations after having practically starved to death. Many got sick with severe diarrhea and other stomach ailments, with much discomfort; however, we had no other choice.

During our imprisonment, the French prisoners provided us with printed sheets which contained church hymns on them. On Good Friday, as we were in the process of being liberated, we were singing, "When Survey the Wondrous Cross." On Easter Sunday, we held church services and also took communion.

Late Monday afternoon some American troops returned with the German camp commander whom they had captured. Included in the group was the sergeant who had been supervising our barracks. Somehow during the night, several American prisoners got to him

(continued on next page)

CAPTURED ★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

and beat him to death. As a result we were confined to our barracks.

Civil law and order and to be restored in the area of Ziegenhain. A request was made asking anyone who spoke a foreign language to volunteer to help patrol the town. Since I spoke Hungarian fluently, I was selected.... Our patrol duties lasted until the 11th of April. By this time, enough troops and MPs had arrived, and marshal law was established.

We left the camp by truck and were taken to an airfield approximately 30 miles from Ziegenhain. We were flown to Le Havre on the 12th of April, 1945, my mother's birthday and the day that President Roosevelt died. ■

VBOB PRESIDENT CUNNINGHAM RECEIVES CERTIFICATE

President Lou Cunningham received a certificate from Senator Michael O'Pake, of Pennsylvania, for his service in the Battle of the Bulge during a February meeting of the Reading Chapter of VBOB. Lou served in the 106th Infantry Division.



Pictured left to right: President Cunningham receiving certificate from Reading Chapter President John I. Gallagher.

John Gallagher served in the Battle of the Bulge with the 106th Infantry Division, 81st Engineer Combat Battalion, Company C. ■

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

VBOB REUNION

SEPTEMBER 4-7, 2003
QUINCY, MASSACHUSETTS

GOLDEN TRIANGLE CHAPTER

Pictured below are members of the VBOB Golden Triangle Chapter (Florida) who participated in the Veterans Day Parade (November, 2002).



The chapter had a convoy of 21 jeeps with 65 riders. (Those pictured were not identified.) ■

Gen. George S. Patton's Daughter-in-Law to Speak at VBOB Reunion Quincy, Mass.



**Joanne
Holbrook
Patton**

Wife of Major General, retired George S. Patton, daughter-in-law of the late General George S. Patton, Jr., and daughter of the late Brigadier General Willard A. Holbrook, Jr., who was the Combat Command "A" Commander in the 11th Armored Division, which joined the Third Army in December 1944 in time for the Houffalize campaign. Joanne thus has "Battle of the Bulge" connections on both sides.

ARE YOUR DUES DUE?

RECOLLECTIONS

COMPANY I

66TH ARMORED INFANTRY REGIMENT 2ND ARMORED DIVISION

By Ira Stanley

During the St. Lo breakthrough, enroute I took count, 27 vehicles were destroyed, most of which were tanks. Of course there was much fighting as we moved forward and we were right in the middle of it and we got cut off for about three days. On one of those days I saw seven tanks hit, five were from another company, the other two were from our company. An artillery officer was in one of our tanks and was killed.

After Elbeuf, France was captured in late August (1944) we were crossing the Seine River, on my birthday by August 28th. My thoughts were that I should be going to Paris to celebrate, but for me that would come many, months later. Instead we were in pursuit of a fleeing enemy.

I wished we could have lingered in Belgium, but we were soon across it and into Holland, and reaching and crossing the German border September 18, 1944. We fought at several places and at Ubach we were in support of CCB I think.

Anyhow, in the "greatest tank battle" on the western front, at Merzenhausen we almost got annihilated. After its capture, we came out with two operational tanks and the dozer tank--that was all of our marbles! Two of our tank commanders lost two tanks each in one day at Merzenhausen, two days in a row.

As a gunner, I got three direct hits on a King Tier. It was like flipping peas at a tin roof! When he turned his gun our way we got into foliage just in time. His 88 sounded like an express train going through a junction. Going into battle I counted 14 enemy tanks and self-propelled guns going across our front from left to right. We called for air support but because of heavy rain and fog the planes were grounded. We called for artillery but their "zero in" shots were lost in the fog. I knew then that there would be hell to pay!

Going into Merzenhausen most of our vehicles were hit on the right flank, our tank commander spotted up a self-propelled gun. I swung the gun to right angle and spotted him and with an armored piercing shell I got in a dead center, broadside hit. Finally the village was captured. After dark a well concealed vehicle made a break for it and got away, but the outfit probably caught up with him the next day!

We had barely gotten replacement tanks and personnel, when the Battle of the Bulge started. From where we were, our assigned place in the bulge was 120 miles. On the eve of the battle at Havrenne, Belgium, the odometer reading on our company's oldest tank was 1,960 miles, minus 23 break in England, minus trip to Tidworth to South Hampton. The rest was continental maneuvers!

We had occupied Havrenne on Christmas day (12-26-44). From the crest of a ridge we had discovered the enemy working along in the area that included some tanks in a nearby woods. I threw a couple of H.E. shots at the tanks in the woods and at a couple of supply vehicles moving away from the woods in the direction of Rochefort, Belgium. We then made a dash into Havrenne and drew some fire from artillery and we checked in with some of our own artillery and we settled in for the night.

At dawn's early light the enemy was practically surrounding us. They had come for our right front, where a friendly unit was

supposed to have been. Our infantry patrol identified them as enemy and I called for a H.E. shell and swung the gun to the left front and spotted the big silhouette of a German tank. About that time he let go with a machine gun on our C.P. His white tracers also verified him as the enemy. I let the hammer go on the H.E. shell, hitting him on the turret and dislodging several items I believed to be troopers as they began to bail out of the turret. The second shot was an armor piercing projectile and hit about dead center and set the tank on fire.

Vehicles were moving from left to right and I began to fire at them. When we were hit by the tanks out front my gun was disabled and we had to bail out. I got another tank into a firing position and he was able to get three more German tanks, while someone else got a 5th German tank. Several German half-tracked personnel carriers were also destroyed at or near Havrenne Belgium.

Our tank "Illinois" was retrieved the evening of December 26, 1944. Our crew got to spend a night in a hayloft. (I had almost forgotten how good hay can smell.) The maintenance outfit got us another tank that was slightly used but was mounted with 76 mm. gun (12-27-44). We rejoined the company area between Havrenne and Rochefort reaching a ridge line near their strong hold. Also, confirming that the enemy was indeed pulling back. They had reached their "high water" mark on December 26th.

But for an enemy that was out of gas they sure were burning up a powerful lot on the night of December 27th. Sounded to me like about 1,000 planes getting ready for flight.

On December 28th our company broke contact with the enemy. When we were relieved by the 83rd Infantry Division. Thus ended our defensive role in the Bulge. The offensive role was yet to come. Teaming up once again with 84th Infantry Division and attacking over snow and ice covered roads, through snow drifts that were knee and waist deep and culminating about 4 kilometers from Houffalize, Belgium. Because we could not get our Shermans across a small bridge in our sector, these were hectic days not fit for man nor beast.

The most profound battle of the Americans versus the Germans was in the Ardennes, "the Battle of the Bulge"! A writer and historian cites Charles MacDonald's argument as being right; "T'was a story to be told to the sound of trumpets! Theirs and ours. One of our beloved leaders "Old Monty" informed his nation after the Bulge: "It is the Americans who are receiving the telegrams edged in black." The 2nd Armored Division was so very much involved in the Battle of the Bulge. Later a writer would call them "The mighty 2nd Armored Division" after we had slashed our way across central Europe.

Over these past years, I have come to the conclusion; that had not four and a half million troops been tied up on the Russian front and "X" number of troops to other fronts of the war, we would never have heard the horn blow in Western Europe!

NOTE: This sheet of stories was published in 2 AD Association Bulletin Issue #4, October-December 1987. Some other stories were previously published (up to St. Lo) in Issue #2 April-June 1987.

Blocking action of Company I, 66th Armored Regiment in the Bulge is listed in U.S. Army in WWII, European Theater of Operations-The Ardennes--Battle of the Bulge, by: Hugh M. Cole, O.C.M.H., U.S. Army.

The battle before the Meuse-Chapter XXII, beginning the fight at Humain (Also at Havrenne) included, pages 50-572 to 532-574. Co I 66 AR is one of the units still in contact with the enemy on December 28 1944. Mentioned in Footnotes on page 574 ■

ST. PATRICK'S DAY PARADE

On March 16th, under clear skies, beautiful sunshine and weather in the mild-60's, Lou Cunningham, President of VBOB, and members of the Delaware Valley Chapter of VBOB, participated in the 52nd annual Philadelphia St. Patrick's Day Parade. The theme of the parade was "St. Patrick Bless Our Priests and Protect Our Armed Forces." DVC Color Guard Dan Iannelli, 487th Ordnance Evacuation, and Al Babicki, 8th Armored Division, led the contingent. Dan, Al, along with Sam Ballinger, 26th Infantry Division, Morris Heydt, 157th Engineer Combat Battalion, and Toni Taglieri, 28th General Hospital, are to be commended for walking the entire distance of the parade. Special kudos to Morris. He worked the crowd like a veteran politician running for office competing with VIP's Mayor Street and Cardinal Bevelacqua. Other members were rode in vintage army vehicles furnished by the Greater Pennsylvania Area Military Vehicle History Society. Elite Philadelphia Police escorted the DVC motorcade from the USCG Station to the parade starting point.

Once the parade proceeded north, as the DVC contingent arrived, the applause and cheering were non-stop the length of the parade. The throng responded and acknowledged a great show of respectful appreciation for DVC members. It was an unbelievable recognition after 58 years plus. The contingent received TV coverage by the local TV station. Dan Iannelli thanks all members who participated in the parade. ERIN GO BRAUGH. May the hand of a friend always be near you.

Submitted by Marty Sheeron
53rd Field Hospital

THE DOUGHBOYS THE STORY OF AEF, 1917-1918

[The following is an extract from the above captioned book
by Laurence Stallings]

The raw American recruits who were rushed to Europe were called "the Doughboys." There can be little dispute as to the derivation of the name. In Texas, U.S. Infantry along the Rio Grande were powdered white with the dust of adobe soil, and hence were called "adobes" by mounted troops. It was a short step to "dobies" and then, by metathesis, the word was Doughboys. The weight of their masses, the Allies hoped, would turn the scales, making anything less than a looter's victory implausible. The Doughboys entered the tragedy at the beginning of the fifth act, with millions of men already dead, like off-stage soldiers in a play; and they entered singing. Woodrow Wilson had given them their simple theme: Kaiser Bill was a villain and they marched to make the world safe for democracy. ■



"It's
Quincy
ol'chap"

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Charles Guggenheim, an internationally acclaimed documentary filmmaker, and four-time Academy Award winner, often contemplated what would have happened to him during WWII had he not been left stateside by a debilitating leg infection. After the war he asked a returning member of the 106th Division about a Jewish soldier he had known. The friend, he was told, died in a German salt mine. That thought never left his mind. Over 50 years later, Guggenheim's final work uncovers the untold story of *Berga: Soldiers of Another War*.

The film will have its broadcast debut when it is presented nationally by Thirteen/WNET New York on Wednesday, May 28, at 8:00 p.m. on PBS (check your local listings). A website, www.pbs.org/berga, will be launched prior to the broadcast.

You may wish to watch. ■

HELMET WORN IN BULGE

LAW LAMAR, 26TH INFANTRY DIVISION, 328TH INFANTRY REGIMENT, COMPANY C, received this hole in his helmet on the 15th of November in an exchange of gun fire with a German soldier.



After returning from a field hospital, he rejoined his unit at the German border. A few days later the division was sent to Metz, where he was in mid-December when ordered to move north in trucks to take part in the great defensive movement to block the surprise German offensive in the Ardennes. His unit fought near Clervaux through the remainder of the campaign.

Shortly after the Bulge Campaign was over, the 26th was moved to Saurlauten. A few days later he received wounds from another enemy mortar shell.

These wounds resulted in his being returned State-side and he brought along this little reminder. ■

VETERANS OF THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE, INC.



REUNION PROGRAM

Quincy, Massachusetts
September 4-7, 2003

• THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 4, 2003 •

2:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.
6:30 p.m.

Registration, Headquarters Hotel, Boston Marriott Quincy
Wine and Cheese Reception (Compliments of Quincy Marriott--ticketed function)
Dinner on your own

• FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 2003 •

12:00 Noon - 5:00 p.m.
9:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Registration, Headquarters Hotel, Boston Marriott Quincy
The registration desk will be open the majority of the day.
Bus Departs for Boston City Tour
Lunch on your own
Dinner on your own

• SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 2003 •

As needed
8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Registration, Headquarters Hotel, Boston Marriott Quincy
The registration desk will be open the majority of the day.
Board Bus for Salem, Gloucester, and Rockport Tour
Tour includes traditional Lobsterbake lunch
Dinner on your own

• SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 2003 •

As needed
8:30 a.m.
10:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
6:00 p.m.
7:00 p.m.

Registration, Headquarters Hotel, Boston Marriott Quincy
The registration desk will be open as needed.
General Membership Meeting
Board Bus for Memorial Service in Hyannis
(Bus reloads for remainder of tour at 1:00 p.m.)
Cocktails (Cash Bar)
Annual Banquet

• MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, 2003 •

Departure

Hospitality Room: Location and times will be posted in the lobby.

VETERANS OF THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE, INC.

Quincy, Massachusetts

September 4-7, 2003

REGISTRATION FORM



Name _____

Address: _____

Wife/Guest Name: _____

Division: _____ Regiment: _____

Signature: _____

Please provide the name of the hotel where you have made reservations _____

	Number of Persons	Cost per Person	Total
Registration Fee (All attendees must register)	_____	\$25.00	_____
Thursday, September 4, 2003:			
Wine and Cheese Reception (Compliments of hotel)	_____	Free	_____
Friday, September 5, 2003:			
Boston City Tour	_____	\$35.00	_____
(Tour itinerary on Information Sheet)			
Lunch on your own			
Saturday, September 6, 2003:			
Salem, Gloucester, and Rockport Tour	_____	\$50.00	_____
(Tour itinerary on Information Sheet)			
Lobsterbake lunch is part of paid package			
Sunday, September 7, 2003:			
Memorial Service in Hyannis	_____	\$25.00	_____
and Tour of the City of Quincy			
(Tour itinerary on Information Sheet)			
Lunch on your own			
Reception (Cash Bar)			
Banquet	_____	\$39.00	_____
Indicate preference: Filet Mignon #____ OR Scrod #____			

Total Amount Enclosed

\$ _____

Mail registration form and check payable to "VBOB" to:

Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge • P.O. Box 11129 • Arlington, VA 22210-2129

REGISTRATION RECEIPT DEADLINE--AUGUST 25, 2003 - AFTER THAT DATE BRING FORM.

(Refunds for cancellations, will be honored in whole or in part, depending on availability of funds.)

INFORMATION SHEET - VBOB 2003 REUNION

Friday, September 5, 2003

After breakfast you will depart for a Boston City Tour. Your first stop will be the Kennedy Library. The John F. Kennedy Library and Museum is dedicated to the memory of our nation's 35th president and all those who, through the art of politics, seek a new and better world. The Kennedy Museum features the life, leadership, and legacy of President Kennedy through 25 exhibits, 3 theaters, and 20 video presentations.

You will then travel to the heart of Boston, right across from the city's famous waterfront, where you will see three large, beautifully restored 19th century buildings. You feel cobblestones beneath your feet. Hear roaming performers. Smell--and taste--wonderfully diverse ethnic foods. Your senses have discovered Faneuil Hall Marketplace. As you know, this is Boston in the truest sense. You will have time for lunch and shopping on your own at Faneuil Hall Marketplace. The Marketplace houses over 125 shops and 21 restaurants.

Farmers and tradesmen, mothers and slaves. They were daring. Daring enough to raise arms against an empire. Bold enough to fight a royal army on the fields and farms and muddy streets of Colonial Boston. They were rebels whose hearts were ignited by the spark of liberty. They were Revolutionary thinkers who stood steadfast against the tyranny of an unjust crown. They were America's first patriots and they would not surrender freedom. The Freedom Trail tells their story. It is the story of America. The Trail is more than bricks and buildings. It is more than words painstakingly inscribed on ancient, yellowed scrolls. It is the life and breath and voice of a people who declared their independence and built their country on the solid principles of democracy.

You will follow the "Freedom Trail," which will lead to the first stop, *The U.S.S. Constitution*. Located in the Charlestown Navy Yard, *The U.S.S. Constitution* was launched in Boston on October 21, 1797, and is the oldest commissioned warship afloat in the world. Her first mission during the late 1790's was to guard American commerce in the Caribbean against the French depredations. She defeated *HMS Guerriere* in the War of 1812, the first in a grand succession of victories in this war. It was in this ferocious battle that the seamen, astonished at how the cannonballs were bouncing off her hull, cried out, "Huzzah! Her sides are made of iron!" Hence her nickname, "Old Ironsides."

From here, you will then travel on through the North End, home of Paul Revere and the Old North Church. You will pass the Old State House as you wind your way to Beacon Hill, passing by the Boston Public Gardens and the Boston Common. You will also experience the Boston Tea Party. The year 2003 marks the 230th Anniversary of this momentous history-changing event. Old South Meeting House and the Boston Tea Party Ship will be celebrating by hosting an historic re-enactment of the debate that sparked a revolution! Come and participate in a spirited re-enactment of the Boston Tea Party as "protesters" rally against the tea tax at the Old South Meeting House, which hosted the original gathering in December of 1773. Then parade down to the Boston Tea party Ship to dump the "baneful weed."

Saturday, September 6, 2003

After breakfast you will depart for a tour of Salem, Gloucester, and Rockport.

She afflicts me! She comes to me at night and torments me! She's a witch! Words such as these struck terror into the Salem townspeople in the spring of 1692 as hysterical young girls called out names. By summer, hundreds had been accused and imprisoned--defenseless against accusations of witchcraft in a society driven by superstition and fear. The court, formed to try the victims, acted quickly. Bridget Bishop was tried on June 2 and hanged on June 10, thereby setting the precedent for a summer of executions. The Salem Witch Museum bring you back there, back to Salem 1692.

It's also in Salem where Nathaniel Hawthorne's famous novel comes to life. You'll meet characters from the novel, *House of Seven Gables*, including the ghost of Mathew Maule, a persecuted victim of the witch trials. Hear of the circumstances that drove the Pyncheon family to lunacy, the secrets that surrounded them and the curse that led to impending death.

Enjoy a traditional Lobsterbake for lunch and then you'll tour Cape Ann, the North Shore of Boston. You'll visit Gloucester, home of the ship, *The Andrea Gale*, featured in the movie *The Perfect Storm*. Then it is on to the country's oldest fishing village--Rockport. Rockport, designated by Walt Disney as one of the most picturesque towns in America, is famous for its art colony, located on Bearskin Neck, and for its galleries, shops and beautiful coast.

Sunday, September 7, 2003

After breakfast you will depart for the Memorial Service in Hyannis. After lunch on your own, we will depart Hyannis at 1:00 p.m. and on your return, we will tour Quincy. The City of Quincy is one of New England's and the National Park Service's most captivating destinations.

The story encompasses five generations of the Adams Family (from 1720 to 1927) including two Presidents and First Ladies, three United States Ministers, historians, writers and family members who supported and contributed to the success of these public figures. The site's main historic features include: John Adams' Birthplace, where the second United States President was born on October 30, 1735, less than 75 yards away the John Quincy Adams Birthplace, where the sixth United States president was born on July 11, 1767; the "Old House" home of four generations of the Adams Family; the United First Parish Church, where both Presidents and their First Ladies are entombed in the Adams Family crypt.

You will also visit the Adams Academy, located on the site of John Hancock's birthplace. Come away with a new appreciation of the exciting times of the Revolution.

Transportation To and From the Hotel

There are two methods to get from the airport to the Boston Marriott Quincy Hotel.

Local Water Shuttle to Quincy: Price is \$10.00. You will then take a shuttle from the Quincy Dock to the Boston Marriott Quincy Hotel (no charge on this shuttle).

Express Bus: Take the Logan Express to the Braintree Express Terminal (price unknown). From the Braintree Express Terminal you will be taken by shuttle to the Boston Marriott Quincy Hotel (no charge on this shuttle).

BOSTON MARRIOTT QUINCY HOTEL INFORMATION

Telephone for Boston Marriott Quincy:
1-800-228-9290 or 1-866-449-7387

Hotel rates are \$82.00 +tax nightly
Be sure to mention "Battle of the Bulge"

From I-93 South:

- Take I-93 South to Exit 7 (Route 3 South)
- Immediately Take Exit 18 (Quincy Adams T Station, Washington St.)
- Stay in far-left lane, following signs for Quincy Center
- At first set of lights take a Left onto Centre St.
- Bear left at the next set of lights into Crown Colony Office Park, the Hotel will be your 3rd left.

From I-95/128 South:

- Follow I-95/128 South.
- I-95/128 South will turn into I-93 North (at Exit 12)
- Follow I-93 North to Exit 7 (Route 3 South)
- Take Exit 18 (Quincy Adams T Station, Washington St.)
- Stay in far-left lane, following signs for Quincy Center
- At first set of lights take a Left onto Centre St.
- Bear left at the next set of lights into Crown Colony Office Park, the Hotel will be your 3rd left.

From Boston:

- Take I-93 South
- Continue from Route 93 South directions above.

From Logan International Airport:

- Take the Sumner Tunnel to Route 93 South
- Continue from Route 93 South directions above.

From Rhode Island:

- Take I-95 North to Exit 12, follow to 128 South, which will turn into I-93 North
- Follow I-93 North to Exit 7 (Route 3 South)
- Take 18 (Quincy Adams T Station, Washington St.)
- Stay in far-left lane, following signs for Quincy Center
- At first set of lights take a left onto Centre St.
- Bear left at the next set of lights into Crown Colony Office Park, the Hotel will be your 3rd left.

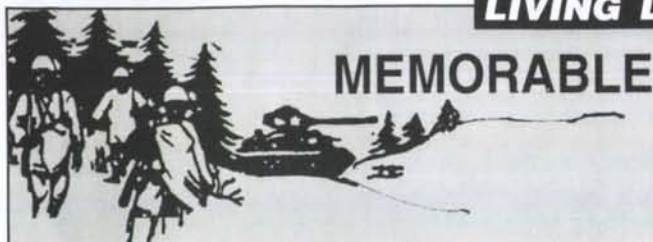
From Route 3 (Heading North):

- Follow Route 3 North to Exit 19 (Quincy Center, Washington St.)
- Stay in far-left lane, following signs for Quincy Center.
- At first set of lights take a left onto Centre St.
- Bear left at the next set of lights into Crown Colony Office Park, the Hotel will be your 3rd left.

From I-90/Mass Pike:

- Take Mass Pike East to Exit 14 (I-95/128)
- Take I-95/128 South will turn into I-93 North (at Exit 12)
- Follow I-93 North to Exit 7 (Route 3 South)
- Take Exit 18 (Quincy Adams T Station, Washington St.)
- Stay in far-left lane, following signs for Quincy Center.
- At first set of lights take a left onto Centre St.
- Bear left at the next set of lights into Crown Colony Office park, the Hotel will be your 3rd left.

LIVING LEGENDS



MEMORABLE

BULGE INCIDENTS

UNEDITED AND HERETOFORE UNPUBLISHED

Accounts of events and experiences in the Battle of the Bulge as recalled and expressed by veterans of the greatest battle ever fought by the U.S. Army in the greatest war ever fought are of much historical significance. These "close-up" combatant accounts are a complement to the study of strategy and logistics and are a legacy of an important battle and victory in the U.S. military annals.

These are priceless first-person recollections by living legends in what General Dwight D. Eisenhower foresaw as our greatest victory and Prime Minister Winston Churchill, in speaking before the House of Commons, characterized as an ever-famous American victory.

THE NIGHT MICKEY DID NOT GET SHOT

December 17, 1944

Ralph Schip
14th Cavalry Group
18th Cavalry Recon Squadron
E Troop
Kirkland, WA

The overall tenor of experiences during a period of combat can often be encapsulated in the recounting of a very short term, specific experience, which by its intensity can be vividly recalled in fine detail, even after 45 years.

The title of this vignette, if it needs one, the "The Night Mickey did NOT get shot."

Troop "E" was a compact, close-knit group, a "fighting machine" of very diverse men who had been "fine-tuned" by our leader, Capt. "Pappy" Meadows.

Our M-8 assault guns were veritable, mechanized armories, when consideration is given to all the extra armament we managed to acquire by devious means. The assigned equipment consisted of a 75 Howitzer 50 cal. machine gun, bazooka, rifles and grenades of all types. In addition to all this, each G.I. had his own personal preference as to what was needed to do the job at hand. My "extra" weapon, and pride and joy, was a Thompson sub-machine gun, the old "Chicago Typewriter" complete with Cutts-compensator and the whole show. (None of those crazy "grease-gun" plumbers' friend for me!)

I did not have to be content with ammunition clips rather than the original style drum. Possibly the Chicago hood who turned the particular gun in for the war effort forgot to include this drum. Anyway, it was a considerable comfort to be able to "hose-down" an area, at night when some unidentified noise or movement, real or imagined, came within the short range of the 45 slugs. I believe the statute of limitations has run its course and could not now be prosecuted, but I'm not ready, yet, to admit exactly how I acquired this unauthorized weapon.

Anyhow, to make a short story long, one of the accepted functions of mechanized cavalry was to act as "rear guard" when such was needed. To this end, we were assigned the duty of

entrenching at a road intersection as "rear guard" while a large number of vehicles and personnel of an armored division task force withdrew and formed a new defense line further to the west. It was then our assigned duty to interdict and delay the on-rushing Krauts emboldened by victory, Schnapps and whatever else was imbibable (pre-crack).

It is a major understatement to say that it was considerably unnerving to watch all this armor and heavy equipment proceeding away from the direction of battle. Unfortunately, such are the fates of combat. Finally, about dusk, the last vehicle and rumbled by, leaving only our "compact, close-knit, fighting machine" to greet and "entertain" the Krauts whenever they elected to make their move.

At dusk, it was decided that no one was to move at night. Also, it was concluded that a verbal challenge would be answered by a potato-masher into the open tank turret or a burst of burp-gun fire. Accordingly, it was decided that the orders of the night were to fire first and ask questions afterward.

Ground fog hung close to the snow covered ground. The thick icy fog alternately lifted and settled, creating all sorts of imagined movement to whoever was on watch. During the bone chilling, cold spine-tingling suspense of a very long night, I was seated on the tank commander's seat in the open turret, wrapped in three GI blankets while on my duty shift, with my trusty Thompson to my right and below on a shelf. About 3 a.m., as the fog lifted ever so slightly a lone figure suddenly materialized close in front of me. I reach frantically for the Thompson, but the carrying strap caught on a latch or projection and I was running out of time to deal with the moving figure. This left the only viable action of a verbal challenge, "Who's there?"

From out of the mist materialized a hoarse whisper, "It's me, Mickey, What time is it?"

I never did ask Mickey why he left his foxhole at such great risk, to find out what time it was. Nor did I ever tell him how very close he came to being a statistic and how narrow the margin was between vividly remembered experience and grim tragedy. The very next morning I removed both the stock and carrying strap and thereafter fired the Thompson from the hip.

So, Mickey, if you are still out there, here's the story, much

(continued on next page)

too late. Also, if you have not yet purchased a watch, maybe it's time to give some serious thought to such a purchase, and "don't leave home without it." Your very life may depend on it.

Have lost contact with all but a half dozen guys from this great compact, close-knit fighting machine and would surely like to hear from any others out there.

ONE DAY AT A TIME

December, 1944

Richard DeBruyn (Deceased)

75th Infantry Division

91st Infantry Regiment

F Company

Buffalo, NY

"F" Company and what was left of the 2nd Battalion saddled up and moved out over the battlefield down the lumber road toward Petit Thier. Two Germans walked out of the woods and surrendered. Our objective was the crossroads of Poteau, Belgium.

At the time we did not know how vital this was. The Germans needed to keep it open in order to extricate their remaining troops and rear guard. They fought desperately.

My recollections of this march are very sparse. On the long move I observed many field pieces in a field to our left. They were of all calibers, and poured fire onto the next hill. A makeshift shelter of cartons contained powderbags and I could see men warming themselves about a pot-bellied stove inside. Suddenly, a man shot out, his clothing ablaze. One of the nearby loaders tackled and rolled him in the snow, patting out the fire with his hands. I lost sight of them as we turned the bend and went on to Poteau.

About daybreak we holed up in a barn near Poteau. A dead German lay in a corner. We learned the 2nd Battalion, 20th Infantry had just captured the village and we were to relieve them. A short orientation by our C.O. let us know there were at least three tanks in the area. We set up a defensive perimeter as dawn broke.

I helped our other M.G. squad (light 30s) set up a position on the forward slopes that would interlock with fire from my squad. Riflemen and a B.A.R. team formed about this position with protective fire. As I started back, murderous mortar and small arms fire drove me to the ground. It took a rather long time to get to my own position, dodging fire all the way. A lad named Bemish had dug in below a tree. I remember telling him that was a bad place to be. Found out later that he was killed by a tree burst. I finally worked my way to the top of the hill and down a ditch to a place just behind my gun crew. I spotted a depression and made a mad dash and leap and started digging into the frozen ground. It turned out to be a manure pit. Someone had a bead on me and kept peppering the ground about me. I piled dirt and manure on the downward slope for protection, completed a slit trench, then started digging down for a two-man hole. I had about completed this when a body piled in atop me. I thought, "This is it!" It turned out to be my section Sergeant Cipriani. I was startled, to say the least!

I was getting fire from my left rear. I had my helmet creased and suspected a sniper in the knocked-out tank. By this time, we were getting heavy fire from artillery tanks, machine guns and mortars from the direction of a cluster of houses down the hill to our front. "Cip" took off his shoes and tried to rub life into

his badly swollen and discolored feet. He went back to Battalion Aid. (That was the last I saw of him until our 1971 reunion.)

The incoming fire became intense as they threw everything at us. Any attempt to attack them was stopped cold. Things were getting serious. I spotted two tanks or S.P.s in a cluster of trees to our left front. They would pop out, fire a few rounds and hide again. I brought fire to bear, but no visible results. Fired the three buildings to our front and later two men were observed carrying wounded along the creek. They disappeared into the woods to our left. The fire continued until dark. All we could do was sit it out.

The 2nd Battalion, 517th Paratroops, relieved us about 2 a.m. They removed our wounded as we moved down the road to Grand Halleux, to where our cooks had set up a chow line. I recall Lt. Hanser being evacuated by jeep. He had a knee wound.

Some of our vehicles and supplies were set afire in the day's action and Colonel Drain moved the wounded from a place near the ammunition and attempted to put out the fire. He received a Silver Star Medal for this.

We were all subdued by the day's pounding and the loss of close comrades. The column was very quiet, each man lost in his own thoughts as we trudged back to an area near Grand Halleux. We had survived the day!

WHAT WAS FOR LUNCH?

December 24, 1944

Hubert Crowell

30th Infantry Division

119th Infantry Regiment

2nd Battalion

G Company

Providence, Rhode Island

On the 24th of December 1944, we were the lead squad into LeGlaze. I was the Bazooka man that day.

I fired two rounds into the first vehicle (halftrack). Three Germans were eating breakfast near by. Day was just breaking.

I had one round left. I used the round on the King Tiger that is at the museum tank 213.

WE HELD OUR LINES

December 24-25, 1944

William J. Gaynor

3rd Armored Division

67th Armored Field Artillery Battalion

Battery B

Warren, Rhode Island

My most memorable Bulge incident was Christmas Eve in the Ardennes. It was a crisp cold night and it was snowing lightly adding to the snow that was already on the ground.

The Germans were throwing wave after wave of German troops in an attempt to overwhelm our troops. They used Tiger tanks to try and overrun our position but our artillery mortars rocket fire and our lines managed to hold. But the accurate 88's caused a lot of death and destruction upon the G.I.'s and armor. The snow on the ground turned red from the heavy losses of both sides.

Christmas Day was another day and the Germans are still

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trying to destroy the 3rd Armored Division and all of its units. But, we are giving the Germans death and causing a lot of destruction to their Tiger tanks.

This is an incident that I will always remember and especially all my falling combat friends and buddies.

ON TARGET

December, 1944

Virgil J. Wagner
(Wag, Whitey, Whatever)
4th Infantry Division
Headquarters Company
Colorado Springs, Colorado

We had come out of Luxembourg early in the morning of the 16th of December. I think we were "mingled" with the 2nd Battalion of the 22nd Infantry Regiment near Dickweiler and Osweiler.

Anyway, my platoon was assigned to cover a small German village and the German Troops pocketed there along a river.

We mounted our 81 mm Mortars in a ravine on the ground. We had a very good observation post some 2000 years away on the river bluff covering the small village and the Krauts positioned there.

I was radio man and gunner. About 11:00 a.m., I got word on the radio from Platoon Sergeant Babick on the OP to zero in on another target. (We already had six coordinated targets. This new order seemed strange to me.) I moved the gun tube according to Babick's orders and fired round one. He came back saying "we must have over shot the village." He couldn't hear or see the burst. He shortened the range. Again we dropped in another round; he said he couldn't detect the hit. He shortened the range again. I dropped a third round in the tube. This time we both heard the burst. Babick yelled back over the radio, "Hey, it exploded in the trees above us!" I said, "Yeah, I heard it too." The first two rounds had landed in the river mud and didn't detonate. Babick corrected the range. I dropped in another round. Babick yelled "Target, three more for effect." In a few minutes the Sergeant jeered back to our gun emplacements and reported to Lieutenant Ed Jones that we destroyed two truck loads of German replacements. We almost got a G.I. Sergeant and his spotter, also.

A GOOD START PROVIDED

December, 1944

Ben Klimkowsky
9th Armored Division
89th Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron
Troop "C"
Etowah, North Carolina

It has been written many times that the 9th was called the "Ghost Division" by the Germans because our units had been encountered at all points in the combat of the Bulge. As a result of the splitting of the Division into many areas we were a small task force with three Armored vehicles assigned to attack the town of Neufchateau from the high ground above the town.

The attack started and we could see the German vehicles moving around and then the attack was called off. In the process an armored scout car bogged down and Vernon Fehr, the driver,

refused to leave and remained attempting to free the vehicle. He was wounded by shrapnel and later recovered by the 11th Armored Division.

In the meantime, we withdrew with heavy woods to our left into which Sgt. Fred Chartier fired with the ring mounted 50 cal. machine gun. Once reaching the high ground overlooking the town we stopped, took positions and observed the 8 shells hitting in the field. Shrapnel hit the back of the armored car where I was heating my feet by the exhaust pipe. It just missed hitting me chest high by about 6 inches and I still have that piece of shrapnel.

Shortly afterwards we saw an armored column coming up the road and when it stopped by us it was the 11th Armored coming into the combat zone for the first time. Their tanks had the canvas covers on their guns and no ammunition loaded. Sgt. Fred Chartier spoke to the Major and told him the situation. We then helped position their equipment. Fred Carter was to be commended by the Major and he later received a battlefield commission. I'm not sure that it was the result of this action although I think it was.

When the 11th Armored jumped off to attack Neufachateau we later understood that they did real good and we felt that the few of us helped to get them off t a god start.

WHAT A START

December 16, 1944

Victor C. Rauch
106th Infantry Division
592nd Field Artillery Battalion
C Battery
Loudonville, New York

A cadre sergeant at Ft. Bragg told us newly-arrived recruits that we had it made--you're in the artillery and that's practically rear echelon. The enemy has to go through the infantry to get to you and that just doesn't happen. Well, that sergeant never envisioned anything like the Battle of the Bulge.

The most memorable event that I can remember has to be the very first day (12-16-44). It would shatter the idea of artillery being safe in the rear. As members of C Battery, 592nd Field Artillery Battalion, 106th Infantry Division, we found ourselves isolated from our infantry. No longer in the rear, we were now in the front line.

The shelling of our batteries had long since stopped. Our howitzers had stopped firing. It would only be a question of time before we would be visited by German infantry. We would have to leave this hot spot but would need an infantry screen to accomplish it. At this time, it was out of the question.

Day had passed, night was falling and our situation grew more acute. Finally, late at night, a reserve infantry unit was able to provide a screen at Aux. We got the order to march. The only problem was my particular Howitzer (155 MM) was stuck in the hole. The arrival of a German burp gunner was harassing our effort but finally, we did get it out and we joined the column.

We exited Laudersfeld against the firing of German burp guns and headed down Skyland Boulevard, not realizing that the Germans were waiting for us at a roadblock. We were able to turn right at the Engineer Cut Off avoiding the trap. Unfortunately one of our other batteries missed the turn off and lost 32 men to that roadblock.

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The next day found us exchanging one hot spot for another but that's another story. I do not believe that I will ever forget that first day.

GERMANS ON BOTH SIDES

December 23, 1944

Harry C. Reed
3rd Armored Division
83rd Armored Reconnaissance Battalion
Company B
Eldon, Missouri

The most memorable event for me in the Battle of the Bulge was around the Hotton Soy area. On December 23 about 3:00 in the morning we heard small arms firing at our road block about a mile from the small town we were at So. We took two jeeps, one armored car, and one light tank. I was in the lead jeep.

About half way to the road block we ran into Germans on both sides of the road. They were cross firing on us. We finally made it through to our troops. Our Lieutenant was in the front seat he was hit in the neck and killed. The jeep had bullet holes all over it and all the tires were flat. I had a 50 caliber machine gun mounted on the jeep. I fired it till it burned up and two other automatic weapons until all the ammo was used up. I do not remember firing them. My driver told me I was sure mowing them down. The driver and I were the only ones to come out alive--out of the 12 men. All the vehicles were destroyed. I was awarded the Bronze star and Purple Heart.

BETTER LATE THAN NEVER

January, 1945

Herbert Reiman
84th Infantry Division
335th Infantry Regiment
3rd Battalion
Medical Aid Station
Carmel, California

I recall two most memorable incidents during the BOB and they both occurred on the same day.

As top non-com with the responsibility of the battalion and line company medics and the setting up of forward aid stations for treating the wounded as we advanced positions.

Soon after our counter-offensive began on January 3, we incurred extremely heavy casualties in our battalion and in our support troops of tankers, anti-tankers, combat engineers, etc. They were pouring into my forward aid station much faster than PFC Johnny Andrako and I could treat and evacuate them. They were lying on the floor and on litters all over the place until we could get to them.

One G.I. was standing against a wall and kept on calling me to help him. "Hey doc. Hey doc." Every couple of minutes he called to me, "Hey doc. Help me." But because he was standing, I didn't think his wounds were as life-threatening as the ones sustained by the men on the floor, many unconscious and just bleeding to death. We had to get to these men first to save their lives.

I really don't know how many hours later I finally asked this man where he was hit. He answered by handing me his left

hand which was hanging threads from his wrist and forearm. It was all-but severed.

I realigned the "threads" and the hand to the wrist as best I could under the circumstances, immobilized the arm from shoulder to finger tips, shot some morphine into him, applied sterile dressings, and got him evacuated back on the first available litter jeep.

Much later I heard through the medical grapevine that my first aid dressings were not disturbed all the way back through battalion, regiment, collecting and clearing stations until he received surgical treatment, and whether it is true or not, I heard that his hand had been saved.

The other incident occurred in that same forward aid station. Our troop advance was stymied there for almost two days. We had so many casualties lying on litters all over the place, we did not know where to stack them. As Johnny and I glanced at each other to determine who needed our immediate attention, I must have pushed a litter with a less serious wounded G.I. under a bed. Almost two days later (Johnny and I never slept), we heard some low moaning coming from under the bed. I had forgotten all about the Joe I had pushed under there almost 48 hours earlier. He must have had a good sleep. We dressed his minor wounds, and he walked out of there to find his outfit. Unfortunately, all my memories are not as pleasant as this one with the happy ending.

MAD MINUTE AT LONGCHAMPS

January 3, 1945

Edward A. Peniche
101st Airborne Division
502nd Parachute Infantry Regiment
2nd Battalion
Company E
Houston, Texas

Our group was holding the northern portion of the Bastogne perimeter in Belgium was attacked in force by two regiments of the 9th SS Panzer Division. The action began about 1330 hours. In a well-planned maneuver enemy armor and panzer grenadiers advanced towards our front from two directions. We were holding the line in the arc Champs-Longchamps-Monville. Our 57mm anti-tank (AT) gun section (two AT squads) was attached to the 2nd battalion, in the center of the line at Longchamps with "E" and "D" Companies deployed on the MLR (FEBA) and "F" Company on reserve. In effect, we were in the same deployment mode as we had been throughout the siege of the bastion of Bastogne (20-26 December 1944).

Our AT position was covering the main road from Bertogne to Bastogne, plus the secondary road to our right. We were emplaced at the juncture between "E" and "D" Companies. By this time, the entire battalion front was under attack, and we were, indeed, heavily engaged. The enemy was attempting to overrun our roadblock. As we destroyed a second tank and managed to damage a third one, all hell broke loose around us. We were being hit with everything that the enemy could fire. It was that terrifying moment when all the weapons on both sides seem to explode all at once. It was the hour of the Mad Minute! The ground trembled as if we were experiencing a strong earthquake. Our gun took two direct hits and was destroyed. All three of us: Sgt. Joe O'Toole, Darrell Garner, our gunner,

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and I were hit by searing shrapnel.--O'Toole was severely wounded; right hip and leg. He was bleeding profusely. Darrell was hit in the face and his left shoulder was opened like a red flower. My left knee was hurting a lot; I looked down and saw blood on my muddy trousers. Voices and moans of others could be heard. The battle raged on all around us. After assisting both of my fellow troopers, I prayed with fervor in English and Spanish, and managed to keep my sense of duty; thus I crawled under fire to reach our command post and report our situation. Our wounded needed medical attention. The good Lord was there for us that violent afternoon and the three of us survived the bloody fire fight. However, for many of our fellow soldiers it was their last battle!

In summary we had been exposed once again to terrible moments of adversity, but we had given a good account of ourselves; our AT guns destroyed 10 enemy tanks. For the 2nd Battalion, 502nd Parachute Infantry Regiment, it was one of its most glorious pages; the line held and history was made. We had demonstrated once again what well-trained and well-disciplined airborne soldiers were capable of doing, even against overwhelming odds.

Fifty-five years later, on Sunday, 25 July 1999 the people of the Commune Bertogne-Longchamps Belgium unveiled a monument-marker honoring the battalion and its attached AT squads for their gallant defense of the perimeter against the Nazi invaders. In that gracious manner, the liberated people of that region of the Belgium Ardennes expressed their profound gratitude to those Americans who fought and died for the principles of World Freedom.

Reprinted from The Washington Post, January 24, 2003

Willie, Joe and Bill

CITIZENS OF THE dictatorships in World War II were fed a steady diet of heroism: images of jut-jawed soldiers at the front, helmeted heroes of socialism or National Socialism, conquerors on the march or noble defenders of the motherland—resolute, handsome and ruthless. Here in America, we got Willie and Joe. Thanks, Bill Mauldin.

Mr. Mauldin, who died this week at 81, kept before us the true face of war—stupid, cruel, confusing, frightening—mostly as seen by two unshaven, bleary-eyed infantrymen who seemed to see no end to the slogging, and yet who kept on going. Sgt. Bill Mauldin, along with the great war correspondent Ernie Pyle, presented the enlisted man's view: the living with constant fear for weeks and months on end, the frustrations, and the petty tyrannies of some newly minted lieutenants. But there was no hatred in Bill Mauldin's work—his German soldiers, most POWs, are as disheveled and haggard as Willie and Joe. His honest portrayal of reluctant but dutiful citizen soldiers was beloved in the ranks, and it had the support of one supremely important officer: Dwight D. Eisenhower. Bill Mauldin's war works were compiled in a book that was once enormously popular: "Up Front." This wouldn't be a bad time for Americans to have another look at it.

WELCOME TO FLORIDA SOUTHWEST CHAPTER

On March 18, 2003, Vice President for Membership Harry Meisel and Vice President for Chapters George Fisher travelled to St. Petersburg, Florida, for charter ceremonies for the new Florida Southwest Chapter.

Vince Runowich was elected president and immediately formulated plans for future meeting dates.



Pictured left to right: Harry Meisel, Vince Runowich, and George Fisher.

If you live in the St. Petersburg area, give Vince a call and plan to join with them. His telephone number is: 727-323-3793. ■



"Must be a tough objective. Th' ol' man says we're gonna have th' honor of liberatin' it."

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Americans Used Weapons of Past in Defeating Germans and Winning WWII

By Mitchell Kaidy - 87th Infantry Division

Inferring quality from quantity is obviously a fundamental and dangerous mistake. Yet quiz most Americans – and many historians – about what won World War II and they will almost certainly invoke the quantitative image of the “Arsenal of Democracy.”

Yes, the United States was the “Arsenal of Democracy,” and yes it disgorged more weapons than the Germans and the Japanese. But ask any infantryman in Europe who defended himself with those weapons and they’ll confirm that our weapons in World War II had a decidedly retrograde cast than their German counterparts.

Clearly, the Germans produced the weapons of the future (although some were employed late in the war), while the Americans were armed with weapons designed 30 years earlier – for World War I. In his memoirs, “*War As I Knew It*,” General George S. Patton, Jr. records his astonishment at finding a high-pressure German pump that fired a six-foot long projectile. It was experimental, but, along with Screaming Meemies, V-1 and V-2 strategic missiles, and jet planes, clearly established German qualitative and even futuristic weaponry during World War II.

Long before we Americans received the single-firing, hand-held bazooka rockets, the Germans were steadily launching “Screaming Meemie” rockets at us, which though failing to become a sustained scourge because of supply problems, pointed to German technological superiority.

The only American infantry weapon that was clearly superior to its German counterpart was the humble, standard-issue M-1 rifle, which was not of World War I vintage. The M-1 took a lot of abuse, including extreme weather and dirt, and kept on firing. Additionally, its rate of fire was higher than the German Mauser rifle.

There was also a smaller American rifle, the M-1 carbine that, under battlefield conditions, often proved touchy. The Browning Automatic Rifle was praised by some, derided by others. It weighed a ton and, unlike the German burp gun, frequently misfired.

Clearly inferior to their German counterparts were the American light and heavy machineguns. This proved a severe handicap. Both the product of World War I, neither gun could hold a candle to the burp gun, a handheld weapon that could fire all day without burning out the barrel, whereas the American counterparts like the grease gun, a replacement for the erratic Thompson sub-machinegun, produced stoppages and barrel burnouts.

As to mortars, there was no clear winner, although our 81mm mortar was a heavy clumsy World War I weapon that was hard to carry. The 60mm was portable, but relatively punchless. I am not familiar with the American 4.2-inch mortar, but because of the heavy explosive and chemical punch and near frontline position, it was valued.

Nor could the erratic American .45 cal. pistol, another World War I weapon, compare with its German counterpart, the smooth-firing 9mm Luger. “The .45 cal. Pistol couldn’t hit the side of a barn,” an American infantryman complained bitterly of the World War I weapon. “The only way you could kill somebody was to throw it at them.”

When it was introduced early in the Battle of the Bulge, the American bazooka was welcomed. It ultimately replaced the awkward, towed 57mm anti-tank gun, which because of its high-profile and crew service, was a sitting duck before enemy tanks and infantry.

However, even the bazookas were of questionable efficacy, American infantrymen attest that unless they scored lucky hits on critical parts of the German tank tread or rear armament, the bazookas were generally ineffectual in trying to penetrate the heavily-armored Tiger and Panther tanks.

Notwithstanding General Patton’s denial, most infantrymen attested that the German tanks, even acknowledging their slower speed than the American counterparts, were superior overall. Although American tanks were faster, they were underclad and undergunned. It took critical months and unnecessary casualties before American tanks began mounting comparable guns.

Of lesser consequence, but illuminating, were the American hand grenades compared to the German “potato mashers,” both thrown weapons. More imaginatively conceived, the handle on the German potato mashers gave them leverage to be flung higher and farther than the heavy, baseball-sized American hand grenade.

As to artillery, most American infantrymen in Europe readily conceded to the German 88mm gun the title of “Scourge of the Battlefield.” Though quantitatively we Americans possessed more and larger artillery pieces, if American infantrymen became gun-shy over any weapon, it was the pervasive 88. So terrified were American infantrymen of the 88s’ killing power, they often mistook German mortar fire, which was widespread for the 88s.

So as far as the European battleground was concerned, the vaunted “Arsenal of Democracy” clearly handed the American infantryman inferior, outdated weapons. In effect, we were forced to win World War II with World War I weapons.

Although the American arsenal could replace tanks and other weapons faster than the Germans, this enormous capacity wasn’t flexible enough to deliver prosaic but critical articles to the front such as an everyday shoe that was efficient during the hideously-cold Battle of the Bulge.

Reinforcing the World War I image, we entered combat wearing leggings and standard-leather high shoes, which, statistics establish, produce three times as many cases

(Continued on next page)

Weapons of Past ★★★★★★★★★★

of frozen feet requiring evacuation, than enemy-caused wounds.

In late January 1945, when shoepacs arrived, they looked like saviors, but, because they were soon found to trap moisture, were then almost universally discarded. Instead, many infantrymen resorted to filling rubber galoshes with straw, which, though awkward, was both warm and plentiful.

Heavy, long wool overcoats were often spotted on the frontlines, especially among young replacement soldiers, but following hot firefights, the dark brown, bulky garments often could be found littering the battlefield.

There was another simple article that could have saved the lives of thousands of infantrymen – ordinary white sheets. With the landscape covered in snow, standard outfitting for infantrymen was dark-wool pants, light green field jackets and/or dark wool overcoats – which, contrasted against backgrounds of pure white snow – provided perfect targets for German gunners.

During the snow-clad Battle of the Bulge, German troops were much more often outfitted with white cloaks than the Americans were. In his frontline memoirs, *"War as I Knew It,"* General Patton recognized this and relates issuing urgent orders for bedsheets to be sewn by Belgium seamstresses into infantry coverings, but the number that reached troops was woefully inadequate.

Just two homely articles therefore – waterproof shoes and white sheets during those hideously-cold months of December 1944 – February 1945 – could have spared



Scourge of the Battlefield - The GERMAN 88mm. Men of the 141st Inf. Regt., INF fire on a German position across the Rhine river. They are using an 88mm damaged gun left behind when the Germans evacuated.

thousands of American lives, and/or injuries to tens of thousands. But apparently the huge, ponderous "Arsenal of Democracy" wasn't foresighted and couldn't move fast enough to produce.

At that time, the Supply Services were commanded by Lt. General John C. H. Lee who, along with other American and British generals, believed the European war would end in December 1944. As a result, the two homely articles, waterproof shoes and white sheets, were critically unavailable for most of the fighting infantrymen. The consequence of these two miscalculations was the deaths of

thousands of Americans and numberless others wounded or hobbled by frozen limbs.

In World War II, the American Arsenal was undeniably huge – and it undeniably produced a plethora of weapons – but it was neither advanced nor farseeing nor resourceful nor flexible. Qualitatively, so far as the infantryman on the ground was concerned, the Arsenal of Democracy failed.

It was the American GI, and only the American GI, who suffered and overcame these failures, and by sheer dint of strength, sacrifice and heroism won World War II.

QUERIES

If you or members of your family were trained at Camp Ritchie, Maryland from 1942 – 45, please call Helen Weiss Productions. They are conducting interviews and searching for photographs and home movies of veterans who trained at Camp Ritchie for an historical documentary for television and for educational use. Please contact:

Helen Weiss Productions
PO Box 21264
Washington DC 20009
Telephone 202-255-0380 or
hweisspro@aol.com

Eddy Monfort of Manhay Belgium would like to communicate with members of A and C Companies of the 509th Parachute Infantry Battalion, members of Company F, 325th Glider Infantry of the 82nd And Div and members of the 333rd Infantry Regt, 84th Infantry Div. (Odeigne) and all others that were at Parker's Crossroad. Eddy is also looking for veterans who fought at Baraque de Fraiture, Manhay and Grandmenil Belgium for a new book that he is writing. If you served with any of these units or fought at those locations please contact:

Eddy Monfort
15, Rue de la Gotte
B-6960 Manhay
Belgium
e.monfort@belgacom.net



THE ELEVENTH ARMORED DIVISION DURING THE BULGE

By Holmes E. Dager

[Excerpts] The accomplishments of the 11th Armored Division [during the Bulge] are told briefly on the following pages. Their simple statements of fact will recall to you men of the Division the glorious accomplishments of your particular units. You tankers remember the horror of the days of Bastogne and the burning and exploding hulls of your comrades' tanks. You infantrymen remember your friends who caught it from a bunker in the Siegfried Line, so that you might go on. And you artillerymen know with what courage your buddies lent the support of their weapons to the attack. You hardworking men of the supply services who forced trucks through icy, traffic-laden roads of the Ardennes, all the way into tank-convoyed lanes in "Indian Country," remember those who paved the way with their lives so that the road could be opened. The Division dedicates this booklet to those whose lives were lost in keeping the Thunderbolt running.

FIRST BLOOD

December 30, 1944: The Nazis were bewildered. Intelligence had reported less than a week before: "The American 11th Armored Division has relieved the 94th Infantry Division in the siege of the Lorient pocket."

Yet, here was the 11th, 500 miles from Lorient, smashing into the enemy's crack 5th and 15th Panzer Grenadier Divisions, and holding the vital Neufchateau-Bastogne highway. Once again, the speed of American armor had baffled the Germans.

The 11th was assigned to the Lorient Pocket on the day first elements of the Division landed at Cherbourg. But that day was December 16, when Field Marshal Gerd von Rundstedt unleashed his massive counter-offensive in the Ardennes. That scrapped original plans.

Tanks, half-tracks, armored cars, peeps and trucks took off in a dash through the rubble towns of Normandy, the Sein Valley, northeast through the Argonne to the banks of the Meuse River. Bitter cold, rain and snow made the march a rugged test of armored skill.

On the Meuse, elements of the Division were actually deployed for the first time. Assigned to guard the river from Givet to Verdun, Combat Command A, commanded by Brigadier General Willard A. Holbrook, Jr., was divided into two task forces for patrol activity. All bridges across the river were prepared for demolition in the event Germans broke through.

In the meantime, the sole supply corridor to the embattled Americans in Bastogne was being threatened by German counter-attacks. Again the 11th changed its plans, turned the Meuse River defense over to the 17th Airborne Division, and on December 29 roared 85 miles to an assembly area near Neufchateau.

Without a pause, the Division launched into its first action. Attacking abreast, CCA and Colonel Wesley W. Yale's CCB jumped off at 0730 next day with the 41st Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron. Within an hour, the drive ran smack into an enemy attack headed for the highway.

The fighting was fierce and bitter. One CCB tank force punched its way into Lavaselle and seized high ground near Brul and Houmont. Despite a heavy artillery barrage that night, all

gains were held. Reserve Command, under Colonel Virgil Bell, struck next day, grabbed key terrain southwest of Pinsamont. Pressing on to Acul, CCR doughs were pinned down by heavy enemy artillery and mortar fire.

Twice, in the slugging battle, CCB armored doughs tried to seize the town of Chenogne but each time superior forces drove them off. The third and final assault was launched on New Year's morning. Tanks and artillery laid down massed fire while the infantry followed up. The town was completely secured by noon.

While CCB regrouped, 13 artillery battalions hurled a paralyzing barrage of fire on the heavily defended Bois des Valets. Armored doughs penetrated the thick woods and cleaned it out. Seizure of this key point doomed the German effort to cut the supply route.

CCB next caught Mande St. Etienne in a pincers move January 2, 1945, and held it against a powerful counter-attack.

Screened by harassing artillery fire, the Division was relieved the next day by the 17th Airborne Division. The 11th Armored Division had tackled two ace Nazi divisions, punched them back six miles in five freezing days, cleared 30 square miles of rugged terrain, liberated more than a dozen towns and ended the threat to the supply route.

The Division suffered heavy casualties in its combat baptism but it had inflicted greater losses on the enemy. After nearly two and a half years of training, the 11th had earned its spurs.

Activated August 15, 1942, at Camp Polk, Louisiana, the 11th Armored Division trained and maneuvered in the Louisiana woods for a year, then moved to Camp Berkeley, Texas. After advanced training, it prepared for overseas duty at Camp Cook, California, undergoing tough desert maneuvers. Arriving in England November 12, 1944, the Thunderbolts readied for combat with two more months' training on Salisbury Plain. Two weeks after leaving England, the Division, under Brigadier General Charles S. Kilburn, was in the front lines.

THE BIG PINCH

January 13, 1945: Von Rundstedt has lost his great gamble. The bulge was shrinking under the hammer blows of Allied power. With the 11th Armored Division as spearhead, Third Army's VIII Corps kicked off to drive a northbound wedge into the enemy line, contact First Army elements knifing southward in the vicinity of Houffalize.

Attacking the column formation along the Longechamps-Bastogne highway northwest of Bastogne, CCA sparked the drive. Massed artillery fire adjusted by liaison planes pulverized an enemy counter-attack. Division engineers quickly breached a mine field that threatened to slow the advance.

Farther east, CCB plunges through Foy and Recogne to Noville where the column was forced to halt before stiffening resistance. By-passing Noville on January 15, CCB seized high wooded ground east of the town. Meanwhile, CCA cleared Pied Du Mont woods, captured 400 enemy prisoners. A sudden counter-attack which knocked out nine tanks prevented further gains.

Elements of the 41st Cavalry, commanded by Lt. Col. Herbert M. Foy, Jr., probed to the northeast in advance of combat commands, seeking contact with First Army patrols. Early on January 16, they met troops of the First Army's 2nd Armored Division at Grinvet, on L'Ourthe River just west of Houffalize.

Initial contact was followed by CCA's infantry, which battled artillery and sniper fire,

(Continued on next page)

11TH ARMORED DIVISION

blasted through road blocks. Furiously resisting Germans fired small arms, artillery and rockets at the advancing troops in a vain attempt to drive them out. Division Artillery answered with a crushing barrage of 12,000 rounds.

The linkup was secure. Enemy units attempting to withdraw from the huge trap were cut off and mopped up by supporting infantry. The way was paved for an all-out smash at the enemy's touted Siegfried Line.

In the drive for Houffalize, there were numerous examples of heroism. Sergeant (then Corporal) Wayne E. Van Dyke Havana, Illinois, gunner in Company B, 41st Tank Battalion, earned a Silver Star for his action at Noville. With his tank knocked out by an 88, he was left in the town with a seriously wounded driver and bow gunner. The tank commander and loader went to the rear to direct other tanks around the town. Van Dyke pulled the driver and bow gunner from the tank, dragged them over to a church wall, [and] played dead while German troops marched through the town.

Van Dyke sprawled on the driver who was suffering from shock. Once, a curious German came over to the apparent lifeless group and looked at the bow gunner's wrist watch but didn't touch him. After lying in this position for two hours, Van Dyke brought the two men into the church and placed the driver, who was unable to go farther, near the altar. Having given him first aid, Van Dyke and the bow gunner crawled back to their lines. The driver, meantime, was treated by a German medic and next day was rescued by his men when they pushed into the town.

A Company C, 41st tanker, T/5 (then PFC) Herbert Burr, Kansas City, Missouri, found himself the only one of his crew able to carry on after two 88 hits knocked out his tank just outside of Houffalize. With the tank commander and gunner dead, the loader wounded, driver evacuated, the turret burning, Burr remained in the assistant driver's seat and fired his machine gun at the enemy shielded by a haystack. After knocking out the crew, Burr pulled the wounded loader from the burning tank, crawled 200 yards through snow back to the CP dragging his helpless buddy. Then he crept back to the tank, extinguished the fire and drove it back, Burr was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross.

Captain John F. Maggesin, Aurora, Illinois, 42nd Tank Battalion, won a Silver Star for leading his company against a counter-attack after his own tank was knocked out. Captain Maggesin directed the assault from atop his tank, then rescued two wounded men under fire.

Alone in a tank hit by enemy fire, Lt. William J. Kieffer, Rockford, Illinois, an artillery observer, directed effective fire on anti-tank guns by radio. Lt. Kieffer was awarded a Silver Star.

The Bulge liquidated, the 11th Armored Division began a drive to pierce the Siegfried Line. It was a job for infantry, engineers and artillery. Mines had to be cleared, pill-boxes crushed, road blocks demolished. To CCR went the assignment of penetrating the complex defenses, punching a hole to let the armor through. ■

CHECK YOUR MAILING LABEL--ARE YOUR DUES DUE OR PAST DUE?? THE DATE YOUR DUES ARE/WERE DUE IS JUST ABOVE YOUR LAST NAME. MANY THANKS.

WWII MEMORIAL DEDICATION & VBOB 2004 CONVENTION

At the March 2003 VBOB Executive Board meeting it was voted to hold the 2004 VBOB Convention in conjunction with the World War II Memorial Dedication from 26 - 30 May 2004. The headquarters Hotel will be the Fairview Marriott in Falls Church Virginia, at Route 50 and the Beltway.

The dedication of the WWII Memorial will be held on the afternoon of 29 May 2004. A Memorial Service will be held at the National Cathedral that Saturday Morning. At the present time we have received over 230 advance reservations for the dedication and have filled the Fairview Marriott Hotel. We have made arrangements for an additional 130 rooms at the nearby Tyson's Corner Marriott Hotel. A very favorable room rate of \$85.00 plus tax has been secured at both hotels. A banquet will be held at the Fairview Marriott, which will seat 800 people. Shuttle service will be provided between hotels for Registered members. Bus transportation will be available to the various WWII events including a special WWII exhibition on the Mall provided by the Smithsonian Institution. Various tours will be offered of the Washington area and its many venues for the enjoyment of our members.

Because of the expected draw of the World War II Memorial dedication, hotel accommodations will become a scarce commodity by the time of the event, which is the reason we have been taking advance reservations for Hotel rooms. If you have not sent in a reservation request we encourage you to do so right away. Sufficient time for cancellation will be available should you become ill or be unable to attend.

Further details will be available in the next Bulge Bugle as we await the WWII Memorial Commission finalizing their plans, hopefully by the end of April 2003.

If you are planning to come please return the following information to our Secretary, John Bowen at 613 Chichester Lane, Silver Spring MD 20904-3331. You may put it on a separate piece of paper, rather than cut up your magazine or e-mail it to johndbowen@earthlink.net

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP+4 _____

Telephone _____

E-mail _____

of Rooms _____ # of people _____

I would be interested in bus transportation for _____ people.
I will plan to stay _____ nights if there are tours and a banquet.

Unit Served with in Bulge _____

REUNIONS

4TH INFANTRY DIVISION, September 7-14, 2003. Contact: Gregory Rollinger, 13507 Danube Lane R-19, Rosemount, Minnesota 55068-3395.

8TH ARMORED DIVISION, June 18-21, 2003, Adams Mark Hotel, St. Louis, Missouri. Contact: Wellington S. Smith, 1436 Regency Ridge Dr., Joliet, Illinois 60436-1333.

30TH INFANTRY DIVISION, August 29-September 2, 2003, Sheraton Music City Hotel, Nashville, Tennessee. Contact: 30th Infantry Division Association, 2915 W SR #235, Brookier, Florida 32622-5167.

84TH INFANTRY DIVISION, August 23-26, 2003, Crown Plaza Hotel, Warwick, Rhode Island. Contact: Bill Almeida. Telephone: 401-433-2183.

87TH INFANTRY DIVISION, August 25-31, 2003, Adams Mark Hotel, Charlotte, North Carolina. Contact: Tom Burgess, 2616 Rea Road, Charlotte, North Carolina 28226. Telephone: 704-366-5911.

90TH INFANTRY DIVISION (All Units), August 14-17, 2003, Millennium Hotel, St. Louis, Missouri. Contact: James R. Reid, Sr., 17th Shore Drive, Willowbrook, Illinois 60527-2221. Telephone: 630-789-0204.

159TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION, September 2-5, 2003, Thayer Hotel, West Point, New York. Contact: Russ Ruch. Telephone: 570-622-2942.

297TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION, July 3-5, 2003, Washington, DC. Contact: Adele DePalo, 6040 Richmond Highway, #713, Alexandria, Virginia 22303. Telephone: 1-800-842-2289 or 703-329-0279.

300TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION, June 12-15, 2003, Holiday Inn Select, Dallas, Texas. Contact: Randy Hanes, 6490 Ridgemont Drive, Dallas, Texas 75214. Telephone: 214-363-3826.

501ST PARACHUTE INFANTRY REGIMENT, June 4-8, 2003, Colorado Springs, Colorado. Contact: Neal Timmons, 10585 West 69th Place, Arvada, Colorado 80004. Telephone: 303-940-4776.

774TH TANK DESTROYER BATTALION, October 5-10, 2003, Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. Contact: Ray V. Brassard, 515 Lake Winnimessett Drive, DeLand, Florida 32724. Telephone: 386-734-2748.

SHAEF/ETOUSA VETERANS ASSOCIATION (WWII), October 6-8-2003, Doubletree Guest Suites Hotel, Charleston, South Carolina. Contact: Don Triffley, 7340 Dundee Street, New Orleans, Louisiana 70126. Telephone: 504-241-3065.

BOB HOPE MEMORIAL IS PLANNED FOR 2003 ON SAN DIEGO BAY SHORE

Dedication of a monument honoring Bob Hope is planned for on 100th birthday, May 29, 2003. A non-profit corporation, Taffy III, has initiated the project.

A fund-raising campaign headed by former U.S. President Gerald Ford has commenced and construction is expected to begin as start-up funds are generated.

The Bob Hope Military Tribute will be located on the western shore of San Diego Bay on a three-quarter acre site donated by the Port District of San Diego. The tribute has been endorsed by the Hope family.

Further information is available at the web site, www.hopetribute.org, or by writing to "Military Tribute to Bob Hope," PO Box 91012, San Diego, CA 92121. ■

Every citizen [should] be a soldier. This was the case with the Greeks and the Romans, and must be that of every free state.

THOMAS JEFFERSON

WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA CHAPTER PRESENTS GIFT

Members of the Western Pennsylvania Chapter recently presented a check to the SVC Center for Northern Appalachian Studies which has distinguished itself by propagating the experiences of the men and women who served in World War II.

The chapter's participation in the programs of the Center has enhanced the communities of Westmoreland County and the classroom experience of the students of Saint Vincent College



Shown presenting a check are, left to right: Hank Stairs; Leroy "Whitey" Schaller; Harry McCracken; Chapter President John DiBattista; Jim Herrington; Dr. Richard W. Wissolik, Center Director; and David Wilmes, Center Fellow. ■

(LETTERS TO THE EDITOR- Continued from Page 6)

KEEPING IT STRAIGHT

I must confess that I was amused by Howard Peterson's statement in *The Bulge Bugle* of February, 2003, page 24:

"There are stories of a woman who had information on the German build-up. It doesn't seem likely that the Germans could have allowed this woman to move about freely. And it cannot even be agreed upon whether she was German or Belgian...."

In fact in *The Bulge Bugle* of November, 1999, page 4, Malcolm Wilkey (who, by the way, must have been with the VIII Corps and not the VII), put things straight: Elise Dele was neither German nor Belgian, she was Luxemburger.

But Howard Peterson keeps on questioning the evidence in *The Bulge Bugle* of August, 2000, pages 6-7, and now again in the issue of February, 2003.

The G-2 Report of the 28th Infantry Division of December 14, 23.20 to G-2 of the VIII Corps said clearly, "The following is a preliminary interrogation of a Luxembourg woman who has been interrogated by the 28th Infantry Division."

Some 20 years ago, I identified the woman as Elise Dele from Bivels, Luxembourg, who died on March 14, 1993, at the age of 90. I led my friend Charles B. MacDonald to her home, where he interviewed her and verified her statements. He published her story in *A Time for Trumpets* on pages 11-14.

If Howard Peterson and others can't agree upon her nationality, it is because of the poor performance of American intelligence: when the G-2 Report was entered into the FUSA G-2 Journal, it said, "A German woman, whose statements are believed reliable according to VIII U.S. Corps, has given the following information...." The report was filed on December 14 23.45 at 1st U.S. Army, but never at G-2 of Bradley's 12th Army Group in Luxembourg City. Where and why did it disappear?

On the other hand it is a historical fact that Elise Dele was allowed to move freely from Bitburg, Germany, to the border of Luxembourg, though Howard Peterson seems to have difficulties believing it.

Let's keep the record straight!

Jean Milmeister
Associate Member
BoB Historian

VETERANS OF THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE CERTIFICATE

Have you ordered Yours?

Over 6,200 certificates have been purchased by Battle of the Bulge Veterans. If you haven't received yours then you might want to consider ordering one to give to your grandchildren. They are generally most appreciative of your service now. They make excellent gifts for that buddy that you served with in the Bulge. The Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge Assn. is proud to offer this full color 11" by 17" certificate, which may be ordered by any veteran who received credit for the Ardennes Campaign. It attests that you participated in, endured and survived the greatest land battle ever fought by the US Army.

You do not have to be a member of the VBOB Assn in order to order one but you must have received the Ardennes credit. This beautiful certificate is produced on parchment-like stock and is outlined by the full color WWII insignias of the major units that fought in the Battle of the Bulge starting with the 12th Army Group followed numerically with Armies, Corps and Divisions and the two Army Air Forces. We wished that each unit insignia could have been shown but with approximately 2000 units that participated in the Bulge it was impossible. However any unit, which served in the Bulge, would have been attached to or reported through one of the unit insignia depicted. You may want to add one of your original patches to the certificate, when you receive it. Please allow approximately 3-4 weeks for delivery, they are normally printed at the end of the month. The certificate will be shipped rolled in a protective mailing tube. Please be sure to place your name, service number and unit, as you would like it to appear on the certificate. The unit name should as full as possible as you want someone reading it to understand what unit you were in. We will abbreviate it as necessary. It is important that you type or print this information. The unit must be one of the 2000 units authorized for the Ardennes Campaign credit in the Official General Order No. 114 for Units Entitled to the ARDENNES Battle Credit and will be the basis for sale of this certificate. The cost of the certificate is \$15.00 postpaid.

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*"This is undoubtedly the
greatest American battle of
the war and will, I believe,
be regarded as an ever
famous American victory."*

SIR WINSTON CHURCHILL
addressing the House of Commons following
the Battle of the Bulge

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VBOB License Plate Frame w/Logos - White plastic w/Black printing	\$ 5.00		\$
VBOB 100 Sheet Notepad w/Logo - "This Note Is From... A Veteran of the Battle of the Bulge" - White paper with Blue printing	\$ 3.00		\$
BACK IN STOCK Large VBOB Logo Neck Medallion w/ribbon Ideal for insertion in medal shadow box	\$ 25.00		\$
VBOB Tote Bag--18" x 15" natural (off-white) color tote bag with navy handles and large navy VBOB logo	\$ 8.00		\$

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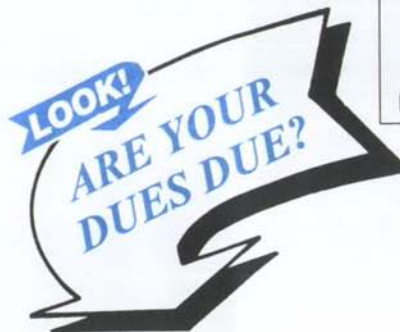


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